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CHALLENGING YOUTH

By

FREDERICK P. WOOD

(Director, National Young Life Campaign Inc.)

Author of
"Thinking Youth," "Questing Youth,"
"Studies in Soul-winning," "Questionable Amusements," etc.

Foreword by

W. GRAHAM SCROGGIE, D.D.

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MARSHALL, MORGAN & SCOTT, LTD.
1, 2, 11 & 12 PATERNOSTER BUILDINGS
LONDON
41 SHANDWICK PLACE
EDINBURGH

U.S.A.
ZONDERVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE
815, FRANKLIN STREET
GRAND RAPIDS
MICHIGAN

CANADA
EVANGELICAL PUBLISHERS
366, BAY STREET
TORONTO

W85C

GA.

<i>First Edition</i>	.	.	1937
<i>Second impression</i>	.	.	1940

1830

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY PURNELL AND SONS, LTD.
FAULTON (SOMERSET) AND LONDON

FOREWORD

I HAVE carefully read every page of this book, and am deeply impressed by its common-sense and holy fervour. Now from one angle, and now from another, the necessity for world-wide evangelism is urged and illustrated. In substance the same things have been said before, but there are ways and *ways* of saying things. No one can read these pages without realizing that this man's whole soul is behind and in what he is talking about. These are not pages of platitudes, but passages hot from the heart.

Mr. Wood has a 'concern', and would have us all to have a 'concern' for the Youth of our day. Need and opportunity lay upon every Christian a great responsibility, and what should be done must be done without delay, or it will be too late. We rejoice in all that Youth Movements are doing, but these will have to do more, and more young people will have to be doing, if an effective impact is to be made upon the entrenchments of ungodliness. It has been encouraging to mark during the last ten years a distinct change of emphasis in many influential quarters. Some denominations, Missionary Societies, and Theological Colleges, as well as innumerable individuals are beginning to realize that the best intellectual and social and civilizing activities can never be substitutes for regenerating power and saving grace. In the presence of the need of a Saviour all accidental and artificial distinctions among men disappear. Princes and peasants, Peers and potmen, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, religious and indifferent, men and women, young and old, black, and red, and yellow and white, all are alike in this, that they are sinners. Sin reduces us all to a common level, and throws us all upon the mercy of God.

Our generation has witnessed Youth's demand for freedom, and what they have demanded they have secured; but now they are becoming tired of the long-coveted liberty, and are asking, 'What next?' Let the Christian Youth of to-day seize this situation, and by radiant witness of lip and life lead a multitude into the freedom which is bondage to Jesus Christ. Paul wore his Roman shackles as proudly as any girl would wear her bracelets, because they were tokens of Christ's love for him and of his love for Christ.

The call of this book is a Challenge. It is an appeal to all the best qualities of which Youth are possessed. It is the opening of a door of opportunity to those who profess the name of Christ; a call for the mobilization of all our spiritual forces for a great attack upon the kingdom of Darkness in the interest of the liberty of its subjects.

If a few persons to whom the Lord has intrusted money would purchase for wise distribution 10,000 copies of this book, I am confident it would be the best investment they have ever made. The Lord speed it on its way.

W. GRAHAM SCROGGIE.

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I

THE CHALLENGE OF YOUTH

" Give us a watchword for the hour,
A thrilling word, a word of power—
A battle cry, a flaming breath—
That calls to conquest or to death—
A word to rouse the church from rest,
To heed her Master's high behest.
The Call is given : Ye hosts arise !
Our watchword is—Evangelize !

The glad Evangel now proclaim,
Through all the earth, in Jesus' Name.
This word is ringing through the skies—
Evangelize ! Evangelize !
To dying men, a fallen race,
Make known the Gospel of God's grace,
The world that now in darkness lies,
Evangelize ! Evangelize !"

Henry Crocker.

I

THE CHALLENGE OF YOUTH

"BUT this is a Christian country," said a friend one day rather indignantly.

"Is it?" said I.

"Of course it is!" she insisted. "We're not heathen."

"I'm not so sure," I ventured.

Now, whatever may have been true of this country in former generations, we must face the facts of to-day; facts which are hard, forbidding, even menacing, and therefore challenging.

Youth Needs Saving.

"We can no longer take for granted that this is a Christian nation," says the Archbishop of Canterbury. "It is slipping away from many of its standards of Christian faith and conduct. It is necessary for all the forces of religion to rally together to keep our nation true to the faith, and to the Christian standards of life."

But not only are the spiritual influences losing their hold on youth, a far more serious fact is that the forces of evil are intensifying their efforts. On all hands the young manhood and womanhood of our country are being captivated and captured by the things that debase and degrade. Drink, gambling, vice and crime are all rapidly increasing among them. The glorification of sport and amusement creates a false scale of values. The vast majority of the country's youth has the "movie" mind. Ignorance of the things of God makes them almost like heathen. Sinister anti-God forces are actively at work among youth. A practical atheism holds sway, and a philosophy of life which dethrones God is perilously popular to-day. A

materialistic blizzard is sweeping youth into a dark and stark paganism.

The results are an undermining of faith in eternal verities, a lowered moral tone, the loss of high principles of commercial integrity, the overthrow of Christian ideals of marriage and home life, and the gradual decadence of a nation which seeks to be "A 1" physically, but is in peril of becoming "C 3" spiritually. We are failing tragically to maintain those spiritual forces which, in the past, were the mainstay of England's greatness.

Is this a Christian Country?

Whatever your answer may be, these pagan tendencies must be arrested. We must save adolescence, and those who are to follow them, from relapse into the dark ages. We must help to raise up a new generation of workers for the churches, and supporters for all our missionary and social agencies. We must also maintain and increase the ordained ministry and the overseas work of the Church. To do this, *THE SUPREMELY URGENT NEED OF THE HOUR IS AN AGGRESSIVE, INTENSIVE, SPIRIT-EMPOWERED, NATIONWIDE EVANGELISTIC EFFORT FOR YOUTH.*

In the last twenty years the Sunday Schools of Great Britain have decreased by approximately one and a half million.

The late Rev. Carey Bonner's words, uttered when he was General Secretary of the National Sunday School Union, were prophetic. "We are losing ground," he said, "in that section where loss, if continued, means spiritual bankruptcy and Church suicide."

Goethe said, "The destiny of a nation can be determined at any time by the opinions of her youth." What is to be the destiny of our English-speaking peoples if the present drift into heathenism goes on unchecked? As a matter of fact, the pagans of Central Africa have some religion, but so many of the youth of to-day seem to have none.

We all know what has happened in Russia and Germany, and they have their propagandists in almost every corner of the globe, so that there was never a moment in history when the youth of the world was in such deadly peril.

Whenever Socrates returned to Athens, he enquired after the welfare of youth. When asked the reason why, he said, "Because the future of Athens depends upon her youth."

Who can fail to be apprehensive for the future when we see this wave of secularism breaking with destructive force on the rising generation?

Beyond all question youth needs to be saved from its own selfishness and wilfulness; from the allurements and seductions of the world; from the designs and devices of the Devil. Youth needs to be saved in this life from all that blights and bruises its beauty and purity. Youth needs saving for all eternity from all that dooms it to eternal condemnation.

Youth needs more than education. A decade ago the cry was "Education will cure crime and right wrongs"; but the fact is that, in spite of all the millions spent on education, juvenile crime is on the increase. Dan Gilbert of America points out that American expenditures on new schools and new gaols have just about kept pace, and that the average age of prisoners used to be forty but is now twenty-five. He adds, "Crime is decreasing among the poorly educated . . . but it is growing by leaps and bounds among America's younger generation—the most highly educated in the history of the world."

Obviously, therefore, youth needs more than educating; it needs saving. To-day many urge an ethical standard of life, but with the best will in the world, young people cannot live up to those ethics, faced as they are by the World, the Flesh and the Devil. Others appeal for religious observances. But "Come to Church" Sundays leave young

people *cold*, because mere outward profession seems to them but cant.

Statesmen never tire of saying, "The future lies with youth," but I venture to reply, "The future of youth lies with us." The politician is for ever saying, "What sort of world are we going to bequeath to the rising generation?" I would like to ask, "*What sort of youth are we going to bequeath to the world?*" Will it be a selfish, self-indulgent, irreligious, Godless, Christless, secularistic, materialistic youth? It *will* be unless they are evangelized.

Now Evangelism includes all those activities, the objective of which is the salvation of souls. The Archbishop's Commission has thus defined it, "To evangelize is so to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Saviour, and serve Him as their King."

"Evangelism," says Dr. Rattenbury, "is the proclamation to the lost, the last and the least of the Gospel of Salvation. And it is more than a proclamation; it is a passionate seeking for them until they be found."

Lord Beaverbrook truly said, "The evangelist is the man who has the greatest capacity for doing good. I would choose rather to be an evangelist than a Cabinet Minister or a millionaire."

Christ saw men either lost or saved. He recognised that their deepest need could not be met by culture, idealism, morality, reformation or even religion. They must enter into a real consciousness of God's redemption, of His forgiveness, and of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

This is youth's supreme need.

The whole world was thrilled by America's heroic efforts to save Amelia Earhart and her flying companion who were lost in the watery wastes of the mid-Pacific. Hundreds of thousand of dollars were expended, and every nerve was strained to save these two human lives. The whole world looked on with breathless interest while the search was

made, but it was of no avail. The two were lost, never to be found.

All around us are young lives in peril of being engulfed in oceanic depths of sin, but the vast majority of Christians stand by unmoved. Oh! to rouse them from their lethargy, and bestir them to action!

For years a man in London has spent his days sitting in a small boat near any of the Thames bridges which have been under repair. Should any workman fall, he is ready to row to the rescue. Not once has he been needed, yet he is there every day. How many of us are *there* every day; *there* in that place where we can save souls? The fact is, men think more of bodies than souls; more of that which lasts only for time, than of that which is immortal.

I cannot understand how any Christian can look at the masses of youth to-day in our streets; on the playing-fields; crowding into places of amusement; and pouring out of the great centres of industry, without longing, with a divine love, to win them for Christ. Their unutterable need does indeed constitute an imperative challenge.

Two types pull at my heart-strings. There is the sporting type, such as one sees on a Sunday in hiking or cycling kit, throngs of them, fit in body, eager for health, alert, clear-eyed, full-blooded, buoyant, laughing youth. What possibilities! What capabilities! "There is something that goes to one's heart," wrote Lilius Trotter, "in strong, merry faces, sadly contented with the show of things."

Then there is the other type. One sees them any night in their thousands waiting in the queues for the cheap seats at the "shows." Pale-faced, frivolous, earth-bound, bored, fed-up, and not knowing what else to do. Life for them has no purpose, the world has no beauty. All they want is thrill and glamour. Yet every one is a soul for whom Christ died.

They have been born in a topsy-turvy world, whose scale of values is all awry. The antics of the latest film-star, the achievements of the record-breaker, or the results of

some league match or prize fight, are infinitely more important to them than the tears and tragedies of the war-ridden lands of the world.

They are the victims of subtle Satanic forces which are concerned primarily with their ruination—forces which, like gravitation, are dragging youth downward. They have never known the pre-War ideals and standards of life, for the sanctions, then challenged, have never fully regained their validity. De-spiritualized, they are, as someone has put it, "restless in the fretful rapids of frantic and nerve-sapping frivolity."

Can anything be more imperative than to bring to these feverish hearts, unconscious of their need as they so often are, the satisfaction which Christ alone can give?

The late Rev. Ensor Walters, at one time President of the Methodist Conference, startled his brother ministers some years ago by saying, "We must evangelize or perish." Dr. J. E. Rattenbury, commenting upon the remark, says "I am strongly of the opinion that this phrase—excellent, slogan as it has proved to be—is not, as some think, a heated or loose description of the situation, but a calm and judicial statement of the alternatives which face us to-day."

The Possibilities of Youth.

Gipsy Smith, in his unique way, once said, "Save an old person and you save a unit. Save a young fellow or girl, and you save a whole multiplication table."

"Give us the young," said Benjamin Kidd in his famous book, *The Science of Power*, "and we will create a new mind and a new earth in a single generation."

I often watch audiences of young people, and wonder what possibilities are wrapped up in them; possibilities of good, infinite good; and also of evil, untold evil. Those personalities which are capable of becoming emissaries of the Devil, can, by the grace of God, become agents of the Holy Spirit, and I covet them for Him.

An old Scotch minister long ago came to the end of a year of faithful ministry, but to his grief he could only report one addition to his church roll, and that was a gardener's boy. But who was that boy? Robert Moffat, and through him Bechuanaland was opened up to the Gospel. The power of God is the same to-day. He is still picking up little "nobodies" and making them mighty in His service.

I am thinking of a business girl in an industrial city. God called her, and she obeyed. In a Church Army caravan she toured great tracts of this country, preached in numberless churches, and in the open-air. She was even permitted to preach in the Cathedral of her Diocese, and was the means of the conversion of many.

Again, my mind recalls a young comedian in a third-rate concert party. He came to a campaign in the Royal Albert Hall, London, heard God's voice, saw his sin, yielded his life, and to-day he is an effective evangelist, greatly used of God.

A mother brought her boy and girl to me recently, saying that they had both accepted Christ in that meeting. Then she added, "I was led to Christ in one of your campaigns twenty years ago."

Here is another example of how far-reaching such work is. Thirty-three years ago an engaged couple sat in an evangelistic meeting. The girl had been converted a night or two before, so nothing would satisfy her but that her fiancé should find the Saviour too. Knowing his impatience with sermons, she laid a plot, and ushered him first into a long row of seats, followed by other members of her family whom she had persuaded to come. She herself sat on the outside seat. "Now he'll not have a chance to slip out. I've got him well wedged in," she thought to herself.

Artful? Yes, but it worked! God spoke to his heart that night, and the miracle happened. Her prayers were answered, and he too was converted. At the Praise Meeting,

six members of that family testified to having found the Saviour.

In a recent campaign sat a middle-aged couple, beaming with joy. They were the young couple of those earlier days. On the platform was their son, the Secretary of the campaign, and Leader of the young people's work in that church. Can we wonder at the parents' joy?

Indeed, "save a young fellow or girl, and you save a whole multiplication table."

Starting evangelistic work as I did at the age of seventeen, one of the indescribable joys to me is to find that converts of the earlier years are the missionaries of to-day. One even hears of spiritual *grandchildren* in all parts of the world. How good God is! To think that one young worker in the Homeland can, by God's grace, be the means ultimately of the salvation of souls in nearly every clime and race! "To Him be the glory!"

The evangelization of youth results not only in saved souls, but consecrated lives. Save youth, and you set in motion tides of blessing which may wash the shores of every land. Was ever a challenge more inspiring?

The Urgency of the Challenge.

Few conversions take place in later life. This is a truism. In youth, the soul is more pliant, plastic and easily influenced. A Methodist evangelist once wrote to ten ministers, ten Sunday School superintendents, ten lay preachers and ten Bible class leaders, all of whom were unknown to him. He found that seven out of every ten had decided for Christ in youth.

An American minister, over a period of ten years, investigated this matter. He received reports of three thousand two hundred decisions for Christ from many different churches. By careful tabulation he found the highest percentage was among the twelve-year-old children. Seventy per cent came to Christ between ten and fifteen years of

age. At nineteen only one per cent. At twenty $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1 per cent, and during all the years from twenty-one to forty-five only $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

Other surveys have proved that the chances are five thousand to one against getting decisions between eighteen and twenty-five; twenty-five thousand to one between twenty-five and thirty-five; eighty thousand to one between thirty-five and forty-five; and one million to one between forty-five and eighty-five.

In a meeting of twelve hundred Christian men, eleven hundred were found to have been converted before twenty-one years of age.

Surely these figures should lead us to do some hard thinking on the urgency of the challenge.

But there is another aspect of this matter to be considered. For various reasons the population of many civilized countries is decreasing. The present birth-rate is causing grave concern. A dwindling population is producing changes in our whole social structure; changes which may be sensational, and which are certain to be profound. Economists say that the British market of the future with its swelling numbers of elderly people, and its dwindling numbers of youth, will be different from anything known in the past.

As for children under fifteen years of age, the decline is already in full swing. The estimates differ as to when, and at what rate, the decrease of population will accelerate dangerously. One thing, however, is clear, that owing to the falling birth-rate, the nation, as a whole, is steadily growing older. At the beginning of the century there were three persons under forty to every one above. Now the proportion is less than two to one. More than half the population is now over thirty. It seems probable that within half a century more than half our people will be over forty. Indeed if fertility and mortality rates follow the trend of the past decade, in a hundred years' time England and Wales may not contain any more people than at present live in the County of London.

A hundred years may seem a long way off, but the effect of such changes is incalculable. Any thoughtful person who contemplates the ultimate results of these factors must realize the supreme urgency of reaching the youth of to-day with the Gospel of Christ. Both for the sake of the individual lives around us now, and the succeeding generations, we must be up and doing.

II

THE CHALLENGE OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

" Oft when the word is on me to deliver
Lifts the illusion, and the truth lies bare.
Desert or throng, the city or the river,
Melts in a lucid paradise of air.

Only like souls I see the folk thereunder,
Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings ;
Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder,
Sadly contented with the show of things.

Then with a rush, the intolerable craving
Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call :
O to save these ! to perish for their saving,
Die for their life, be offered for them all.

Therefore, O Lord, I will not fail or falter,
Nay, but I ask it, nay but I desire ;
Lay on my lips Thine embers of the altar ;
Seal with the sting, and furnish with the fire.

Quick, in a moment, infinite for ever,
Send an arousal better than I pray :
Give me a grace upon the faint endeavour,
Souls for my hire, and Pentecost to-day."

" St. Paul "—W. H. Myers.

II

THE CHALLENGE OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

THE whole world is facing to-day one of the most critical periods in its history. Publicists have been saying this, I know, for years, as one crisis after another has threatened to overwhelm us. Yet masses of church-going people seem still unmoved and complacent whilst "the sinister shadows of coming events lie ominous and black across the face of the whole world." It is passing strange in such days as these, when the world is gripped in a fear complex, that so many Christians are unobservant of the influences which menace youth.

It is no good putting on blinkers, nor looking at the world through rose-coloured spectacles. Neither should we hide our heads ostrich-like, in the sand, and think that all is well. Let us rather face squarely the forces with which we shall have to contend when we set out to evangelize youth. At the risk of being dubbed a pessimist, let me try to depict the present situation as I see it. There are, it seems to me, four factors which we cannot ignore.

The Paralysing Forces of Formal Religion

One of the basic troubles to-day is that so many churches are formal, lifeless and spiritually dead. Some, though *sound*, are sound asleep; good, but perilously near being *good for nothing*. In many cases the church itself is the pride of its members, the preaching is cultured, the choir of the highest quality, the organ one of the best; but one can only say of the services that they are "icily regular, and faultily faultless."

And no one gets converted.

I know of a church where they keep an old register of all who have been born again, but on examining it, a friend of mine found that there had been no births for twenty years!

In a London suburban church there are forty different activities going on every week, but not one Prayer Meeting. Is this an extreme case? I wish it were!

Thirty years ago, a college Professor sent out a questionnaire to Christian churches all over the world. He studied carefully the replies, but the matter was put on one side owing to pressure of work. Recently, he repeated the investigation, and when he compared the results, he said, "*The difference between the spiritual condition in our churches now as compared with a generation ago is that a vague religiousness has taken the place of a vital Christian experience.*"

The truth is that the "world" has eaten its way into the Church. Its cancerous roots are everywhere. There is no longer a clear line of demarcation between the Church and the world. Joseph Parker, that great preacher of the City Temple fifty years ago, said once that if the Gospel of a divine and atoning Saviour should ever cease to be preached from his pulpit, let Ichabod be written up over the door of the church—"The glory is departed." Over how many portals should this mystic word be written to-day, I wonder?

Shortly before his death, Dr. Samuel Chadwick truly said, "Every fundamental thing in the evangelical faith is challenged to-day, not in the world, but in the Church. The whole mentality of our generation rationalizes faith till it has taken out of the Gospel every vital quality and very miracle-working power. Yet the Church that does not work miracles is dead and ought to be buried."

The Westminster Teachers' Quarterly cites this instance, "On one occasion three people went into church to get help. The first was a business man who had failed, and was contemplating suicide. The second was a youth of

extravagant tastes who, finding his wages insufficient, was planning to steal from his employer. The third was a young woman of gay habits and conduct who had been tempted from the path of virtue. The choir sang an anthem about building the walls of Zion. The minister addressed an eloquent prayer to the Lord, and then preached a sermon on the theme, 'Is Mars Inhabited?' and thus the hungry souls that needed bread received stones.

"The man committed suicide; the boy stole and was sent to a penitentiary; and the woman went home to a life of shame."

Is this an unfair indictment? I wish it were. With all my heart I grieve over every such opportunity missed. Yet the awful part of it is that so many folk go away from such a church saying, "We've had a very nice service!" Yes! It was *nice* for them because it made no one feel uncomfortable. Heart needs were not met. Sin was not condemned. No demand was made upon the will, so folk *liked* it.

But such a service "cuts no ice". The keen edge of the spiritual message has been blunted, so that nothing happens.

A minister wrote recently, "I greatly regret that the proposed campaign has been turned down. I fear the ministers have no desire to go forward. I stand almost alone for evangelistic effort. That has been my burden and sometimes my agony in my ministry here." Thank God for such men who are willing to be thus *burdened*. They have a difficult task. They plough a lonely furrow, but their reward is sure.

Many people are saying, "What is wrong with our churches?" The answer is that the present failure lies in the appalling indifference of professing Christians to the implications of their profession. The vast majority who are counted as church members cannot be counted upon in the work of evangelism.

We are living in times when, as Paul foretold, "there is a form of Godliness" but "the power thereof" is denied.

As in Laodicea, the Church to-day is so often neither cold nor hot. She is "increased with goods and hath need of nothing", but God sees her "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked", and so loathsome to Him that He says, "I will spue thee out of My mouth."

These forces of formal religion are crippling evangelistic energy. They paralyse prayer, the nerve centre of the Church. They paralyse passion for souls, so that the heart action of the Church is low. They paralyse deep devotion to Christ and His cause, till the Church becomes a cripples' home instead of an army headquarters. And the trouble is so often a *creeping* paralysis. It is slow and gradual, but very sure, until to-day we have thousands of churches which are nothing more than social clubs, and where anything in the nature of aggressive evangelism is entirely taboo. Such churches cannot produce soul-winners. Indeed, often their members are a serious hindrance to the soul-winning efforts of true Christians.

The situation in one factory well illustrates this. Careful investigation revealed that 74 per cent of the employees were totally indifferent to religion.

4 per cent were true witnesses for Christ.

7 per cent were active anti-God propagandists.

15 per cent were formal worldly church members.

If these 15 per cent who were unwilling to take a definite stand for Christ in that factory could have been added to the 4 per cent who were zealous soul-winners, there would have been 19 per cent for God, against 7 per cent for the Devil.

It is the formal church member who lets down the cause of Christ every time, and gives the Devil the advantage in the fight.

The Subversive Forces of False Religion.

Formal religion creates fertile soil in which false religion can grow. The cults have gained their adherents largely

from starved souls in the spiritually dead churches of traditional Christianity.

Many a Spiritualist was once in a church, but in some hour of grief, for lack of definite teaching on the future life, and "the comfort of the Comforter", went off to some "Medium".

The Christian Scientist who has grown tired of the inconsistencies and hypocrisies of unspiritual Christians has turned away to a purely ethical religion; or else in time of sickness, for want of instruction in the spiritual aspect of the problem of pain, has turned to a "practitioner".

Many have become Roman Catholics because, having lost faith in the authority of the Bible, through destructive criticism, they have submitted to the authority of Rome; and for want of clear teaching on the subject of forgiveness, through the merits of the Cross, they have sought for peace of conscience in priestly absolution.

The lack of sound teaching on the Holy Spirit and His fulness has driven many into the ranks of extreme Pentecostal and other psychic movements.

I was asking an old London minister the other day to compare and contrast the present day with that of D. L. Moody. He said, "In the majority of churches the Bible was taught, so that the people had some background of Scriptural knowledge. Though not all were evangelistic, the churches, generally speaking, had sown the seed of God's Word; and a far bigger proportion of the population attended them than to-day. When Moody came, therefore, with his winning message of the love of God in Christ, he reaped a mighty harvest." To-day it is different. Young people are not being taught the Bible, or if they are, they have, as a rule, critical ideas about it, learnt largely from pulpits, schools, colleges and books. The result is that they are fair prey for the deadly work of those who advocate some cult or philosophy of life which is subversive of all that is truly Christian.

General William Booth was prophetic in his utterance

at the beginning of this century, when he said, "I consider that the chief dangers that confront the coming century will be religion without the Holy Spirit, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without regeneration, morality without God, Heaven without Hell."

The Bishop of Chelmsford in an address to his clergy suggested, somewhat humorously, that the following might suffice as a so-called *creed* for some people to-day.

"I believe in God, because I feel sure that there must be a God of some kind: a sort of eternal good nature and easy-going tolerance.

"I believe that Jesus Christ lived a holy life which I ought to admire, and I believe that I ought to obey the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. I am not quite clear what it contains, but I imagine no one can be expected really to live up to it. I have great reverence for the Cross, but I do not pretend to understand what it means. I am not quite sure whether I believe in life everlasting, but if there is such a thing, I believe that somehow or other everything will turn out all right for everybody in the long run; at any rate I hope so. Amen."

The Christian, commenting upon this, adds, "It is such windy doctrine as this that has caused so many false 'Religions' to appear and flourish in the present century. Multitudes of men and women are ready to profess and call themselves Christians under cover of a code of beliefs which eliminates the essential tenets of Christianity."

We are sometimes told that people are more religious than they were. They may not go to church, some say, but there is a lot of religion all the same. "See how much space the Press gives to it," say the optimists. They point to the popularity of radio religion, and community hymn-singing at football matches; to the vogue of "the Groups", and the wide circulation of a certain type of religious book. But in his address the Bishop of Chelmsford pointed out that this may all be very misleading. There is far too much specious religiosity, and people are deceived, thinking it

is the real thing. Vague aspiration is interpreted as deep spiritual feeling. People cannot sift the false from the true, and they accept everything supernatural as divine. They see no difference between reformed lives and regenerated hearts, and they mistake psychic emotionalism for spiritual manifestation. The counterfeit sometimes appears more successful than the real. Because of its shallowness it makes no creedal demand, and so it avoids the offence of the Cross, and gains adherents easily.

All this false religion is satanically subtle. It pretends to be orthodox, and so attracts the untaught and superficial. It masquerades in the appearance of the real thing. It uses the terminology of the true Gospel, and thus as an "angel of light" tries to deceive "even the very elect".

Dr. Campbell Morgan has well said, "To my own heart and soul the supreme terror of the present hour is the satisfaction of humanity with false forms of religion. Volumes have been issued from the press containing teaching which cuts the nerve of morality, yet much of such literature makes a gesture to God, even patronizes God."

Where such teaching prevails, it is well-nigh impossible to mobilize the religious forces for a real Gospel effort. Many doors are thereby closed which would otherwise be open to large-scale evangelism. Liberal theology, even of the mild sort, simply cannot evangelize. Its bankruptcy is seen in its pathetically futile attempts. It may preach a social and ethical Gospel, but not one that *saves*.

Such poor substitutes for the real thing remind me of the "nearbeer" of Prohibition days in America, of which the coloured man said, "It looks like beer, and tastes like beer, and smells like beer, but when it gets down inside you, it ain't got no authority."

The late Fred B. Smith, speaking at a ministers' meeting in Chicago shortly before his death, told the following story. He said—I quote it as he, an American, gave it,

"I was brought up in a little town of Iowa. We had an old-fashioned church in that town. Every year we had

a protracted meeting that lasted from corn-husking until seeding-time. There were some remarkable conversions in these revival meetings.

"A few years ago I was in China. I had a speaking engagement in the Union Church of a leading city, and I was invited to meet the missionaries. In the compound that night, a young woman came up to me and said, 'Hello, Uncle Fred.'

"'Who are you?' I asked.

"'I am Deacon Jones' daughter from Podunk, Iowa. I grew up in the community where you were reared, and I was converted in the revival meeting in the church you attended, and now I am in China as a missionary.'

"Another girl came up and said, 'Hullo, Uncle Fred.'

"'Who are you?' I enquired.

"'I am Elder Smith's daughter from Podunk, Iowa, and I was converted in a series of evangelistic services held in the church where you were converted, and I am out here as a missionary.'

"Another girl came in and called out, 'Hullo, Uncle Fred.'

"'Who are you?'

"'I am Trustee Johnson's daughter from Podunk, Iowa, and I was converted in the winter revival meetings in the church where you grew up, and I am out here as a missionary.'

"There were three missionaries in China all of whom had been converted in an old country church that has a protracted meeting every year from corn-husking until seeding-time. Recently I was in a great church in New York, and I told this story. When I had finished I turned to the Pastor, and said, 'Dr. J—— you have a great building and a wonderful equipment here. How many missionaries have you sent out to China?'

"The Pastor stood to his feet at the conclusion of the message and said with a tremor in his voice, 'Mr. Smith, you have touched us at a very sensitive point this morning. So far as I know this great church has never produced a

missionary. When we want a missionary we have to go to some old-fashioned church that has a protracted meeting every winter.'"

Mr. Smith concluded with this challenge, "Brethren, we had better get back to the old Book and the old Gospel."

The Blatant Forces of Irreligion.

Formal religion and false religion have so lowered the vitality of organized religion that, unless it fights for its very life, the forces of irreligion will complete its destruction.

Robert Ferguson in his book, *The Evangelism for To-day*, says, "The relationship between the spiritual and the material follows the law of inverse ratio. If the spiritual is at the flow, materialism is at the ebb. The one is constantly being played off against the other. The more vital thing takes command of the situation, and makes the other fetch and carry for it. When one is in the ascendancy, the other is on the wane."

Now it is the ascendancy of irreligion and of materialism which makes evangelism so difficult to-day, and threatens the very life and existence of Christian civilization. As Ferguson points out, other civilizations have gone down under the play of these disintegrating forces. It is always only a matter of time how long an unspiritual commonwealth can hold out against them. That is why some of the most far seeing men of our day are apprehensive lest "the footsteps of the pallbearers that have carried out other dead civilizations should be hesitating at our doors."

These forces of irreligion are passionate, persistent and powerful. Their effects are seen on all hands. In one district of London the population has increased during this century by twenty-one thousand, yet church attendance has decreased.

Out of a population of one hundred and fifty-seven thousand, a census revealed the non-churchgoers to be one hundred and thirty-nine thousand.

Eighteen cinemas in that area draw more people on a Sunday evening than one hundred and thirty-two churches.

Here is another fact which should make us think. Of London's seven and a half millions, less than a million have any definite connection with the churches.

In the provincial cities the proportion is higher, but, at the best, the chances are about four to one that the person next to you in the bus has no religion. On the other hand, more than twenty millions of our population in Great Britain go to cinemas at least once a week. Hugh McCullough says, "The world's esperanto is the movie theatre, and the Devil has a seat on the Directorate." Sheer preoccupation with material interests is ousting the spiritual from people's thoughts. Dr. de Blois writes in his comprehensive book, *Evangelism in the New Age*, "The clatter of the wheels drowns the voice of the Spirit. . . . Man can no longer hear the echo of his heart's pulsations, save in the chug-chug of a motor, or the throb of a piston. The material still deadens whilst it defies the spiritual."

I have just been talking to a heroic little Deaconess who spends her days visiting—visiting in one of the lowest parts of London. In one house where fifteen families exist—one cannot call it living—she spoke to a girl in a doorway, a poor little painted doll, degraded but pert. Inviting her to the church, she was met with the reply, "Gosh! We aint even moral 'ere."

A minister friend of mine was travelling in a train when two working men got in with him. After a time he began to talk with one of them and said, "May I ask, do you know Jesus Christ?" To which the man answered, "D'ye mean the fella 'oo 'as 'is name on churches?"

A letter in a leading London "Daily" told of a Secondary School Mistress who was taking Scripture with her class. It was near Easter time, so she was telling the girls the account of the trial of our Lord. When she paused for a moment, the girls called out, "Go on! Did He get off?"

Never before had they heard of that trial. In a class of thirty boys of fourteen years of age, in a well-known public school, only one had ever heard the story of Elijah on Mount Carmel.

I was startled the other day by a placard which set me thinking furiously. It read, "The Lid off London." What scope for the imagination! One thought of the haunts of vice in Mayfair and Soho, to say nothing of "down East". Night clubs and slums, West End Cabarets, and East End doss houses; the luxurious self-indulgence at one end of the scale—(I know of one house where their annual drink bill for home consumption is at least £360)—and the poverty and degradation at the other.

I thought of the broken hearts and ruined lives, little children cursed from birth by unworthy parents; boys and girls growing up with inherited cravings and impure habits. Rich and poor, wealthy and destitute alike under the crushing weight of sin, sorrow and despair.

I thought, too, of the fight against evil waged by so many of our youth. The atmosphere in which they live, their homes, so often non-Christian or even anti-Christian, devoid of privacy, and surrounded by evil. Their work, so often consisting of mechanised monotony, and soul-less routine, and at every turn a ceaseless fight for purity of thought and life. What wonder that we find the inevitable reaction towards frivolity, and the mad rush after pleasure? Satan is making a dead set at youth to-day. He takes no holidays. His agents work in ceaseless activity. Their ingenuity is amazing. What an understanding of youth psychology they have! What adaptability of means for nefarious ends, as they plan and plot and lay their snares to trap unwary youth!

Is it any wonder that we see all around us young lives that are bruised, blighted and broken by sin; shrivelled, lonely, thirsty, disappointed, fiercely tempted, sin-bound, habit-enslaved lives; defeated, discouraged, despairing lives; lost lives; lifeless lives!

"The Lid off London!" What a phrase! Could any of us bear the sight?

What then can we do? One thing is certain; "you can only counter a passion by a super-passion". "There is no counteractive to this surging flood except its spiritual and more powerful opposite." That is why when I frankly and honestly measure those opposing forces I am driven to my knees for a mightier anointing of the Holy Spirit's power.

The Militant Forces of Anti-Religion.

Formal religion makes fertile soil for false religion. False religion is first cousin to irreligion. Then it is but a step to anti-religion.

Before this century began, such a situation as we are facing to-day was largely unknown. We always had formal religion, false religion, and irreligion with which to contend, but now we are up against militant anti-Godism. One is familiar with that phrase as relating to Russia, but now we hear of a book, the title of which is, *God Does Not Exist*, and the author is none other than Benito Mussolini. Hitler has announced his intention of removing the Cross from every church in Germany, and in its place setting a copy of his book, *My Struggle*. Abundant evidence can be produced to show the world-wide menace of these forces. Yet still there are many who dub those who sound out a note of warning as pessimists.

In our country the League of Militant Atheists is known as The League of Socialist Free Thinkers. They have chosen this title, thinking that it may sound a little less outrageous to squeamish English minds than the original Russian name, and therefore will be more calculated to gain acceptance in Great Britain. This is only one of the twenty-one organisations, all of which are working—with the help of a score or more magazines and papers—in opposition to religion and morality in our land. It was chiefly under these auspices that the Godless Congress

was held in London in September, 1938. Their efforts are directed specially toward youth, for they know where they can find the most effective propagandists. The League of Young Godless is the Juvenile Section of the League of Militant Atheists.

In Russia, twenty-five million youths, have never known anything else but this anti-Godism. The trouble is that people think it is only in Russia. They do not realize the subtle way in which these ideas are spreading in our own land. An organised propaganda is being carried out among British School Teachers, and there are many Communist Sunday-schools in Great Britain where atheism is taught. In a protest by the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland it is stated that there are twenty periodicals spreading irreligious poison, and affecting the minds of the uneducated with hatred of Almighty God.

The old atheism, whilst attacking the doctrines of Christianity, lauded the Christian standards of morality, but this new form is definitely Godless, making blatant and blasphemous mockery of the Christian ideals and standards of moral behaviour.

It is a long way back now to the days when Spurgeon made his tremendous protest against what was then known as the "Down-grade Movement". Someone who interviewed the aged Dr. Watkinson questioned him on his recollection of Spurgeon. Referring to those days when the present apostasy began, he said, "The North American Indians had a saying among them which they used of a man who was keen of discernment and quick to detect secret dangers—they used to say, 'He hears the cataract'." Then turning to the interviewer the old doctor said, "Charles Haddon Spurgeon '*heard the cataract*'."

To-day it is thundering in our ears, yet some people are still deaf to it. Spurgeon heard it coming. His protest was ridiculed. To-day it is more than justified.

Perhaps you will say I have painted a very black picture. I have, but it is not overcoloured. Oh that it were! But I

want these considerations, not to depress, but to challenge us.

I know that Materialism, Secularism, Communism, and other "isms" are all bankrupt creeds.

I know that Christianity alone has an adequate message for the world to-day, "which is in danger of smashing itself to pieces, like an engine, on the buffers of judgment."

I know the glorious Gospel of the Crucified yet Living Christ is the only means of regenerating men and women lost in sin.

I know that it is as powerful as ever to redeem and uplift.

I know that the ultimate victory is with Christ.

I know that two hundred years ago when religion was in decay, and faith was shrivelled, and the masses were given over to pleasure and sin, there were men of faith and prayer preparing for the great Methodist Revival.

I know that that Revival awakened the whole of England.

I know that God is just the same to-day, but He waits for instruments that He can use. The forces of the Holy Spirit are always within reach, and are as mighty now as at Pentecost.

But there are human conditions for the manifestation of divine power.

Outside a certain factory is an advertisement which reads, "Makers of accessories for the transmission of power".

That is what we must become.

Someone has said, "A man's ability is not the measure of his full capacity, for through him a vaster force can operate when fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit's unhindered power."

When Benhadad besieged Samaria with his mighty army, and the king of Israel was told by the prophet that the great host would be delivered into his hand, he asked, unbelievably, "By whom?" The answer came, "By the young men"—two hundred and thirty-two of them—an insignificant minority, but the battle was won.

Are we asking, perhaps unbelievably, as Ahab did, "By whom?" Do we see the forces arrayed against us in an almost invincible host, and wonder through whom a spiritual awakening can come? I believe it is to be in our day as in theirs, through "the young men".

I know that all power is in our Risen Lord. Then I ask myself, how can the Christian youth of to-day become more effective accessories for the transmission of this power?

Is there something blocking the channel? Is God hindered by anything in us? Is it that we are not reflecting sufficiently the spirit of Christ; that we are not passionate enough in our anxiety for souls; that we are not strong enough in our corporate prayer, and not believing enough in our intercessions? Is it that we are not sacrificial enough in our service, or not whole-hearted enough in our consecration?

As we face the opposing forces we may well remind ourselves of our Lord's words, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

Dr. Biederwolf tells of a time when things were at a low ebb in America, spiritually. In Princeton and Yale, the two leading Universities, there were scarcely any students who professed to be Christians. When Lyman Beecher entered Yale, nearly all the senior class were confessed infidels. Yet in 1802 that same University experienced a mighty revival. One third of the students were converted and one half of those students became ministers.

So we can take heart, not only from the assurances of God's Word, but from history. In spite of all the paganizing influences, and all the poisonous philosophy which threatens the very moral fibre of youth to-day, in spite of all the unbelief and departure from the faith, we can still pray and expect with triumphant assurance that we too may see a gracious manifestation of God's power.

The revivals of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries all came after periods of appalling darkness. Is it too much to believe that we too, in the twentieth

century, may see a real movement of God in our midst? There are signs of it already. It is surely significant that while I am writing this book, a debate has taken place at the Oxford Union Society, the subject of which was, "A Return to Religion is the only Solution of our Present Discontents". The attendance was so large, and so many members desired to speak, that the debate was adjourned to a second session. The motion after keen discussion was carried by an overwhelming majority of 276 votes to 94.

God may work in different ways from former times. He is not limited to any one method. But are we ready and utterly at His disposal so that He can pick us up and use us just as He wills and when and where? Revivals begin with God's own people. It seems to me that the Spirit is resting more and more upon Christian youth. Are *they* to be His chosen instruments? It may be. If so—are we prepared for all that will be involved? A personal revival must precede a national revival. But such a quickening will mean deep heart searchings among those of us who do love the Lord. He may have to humble us to the dust, break us, show us our failures and inconsistencies, before the outside, untouched, non-Christian masses can be reached. Then there will have to be a frank facing of facts. Away with all blinkers, false optimism, faithless pessimism, narrow denominationalism and smug contentment.

To Isaiah of old, after the vision of God, came conviction of sin, and then a deeper understanding of the needs of the people. On his knees he faced up to the whole situation; and so must we. Then evangelism will become a passion—no longer a hobby. With anointed eyes we shall see the world as Christ sees it, and we shall begin to know something of "fellowship with His sufferings".

Apathy is one of our chief enemies. Fight it. To sit back in an easy chair and vaguely long for revival will not bring it. The wise man said truly, "*The soul of the sluggard desireth and hath nothing.*" (Prov. 13: 4.) God challenged His people of old with these words, "*Awake, awake, put*

*on thy strength O Zion . . . shake thyself from the dust ;
arise . . .*"

The same challenge is sounding in our ears to-day. What will be the response of youth? Will it be "*Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power*"? (Psalm 110: 3.) My friend, the Rev. Geoffrey King, has paraphrased it thus, "*In the day of Thy muster Thy people are they who are freewill offerings in priestly dress. From the womb of the morning they have upon them the dew of their birth.*" Commenting upon this he says, "In these days of Christ's muster it is very significant to note that in the evangelical section of the church of God in all denominations the Holy Spirit is laying a four-fold emphasis upon us,

- (i) A renewed emphasis upon prayer.
- (ii) A renewed emphasis upon the victorious life, and the full possession of the Holy Spirit of God in the born-again heart for practical everyday victory over sin.
- (iii) A renewed emphasis upon the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus.
- (iv) A renewed emphasis upon the absolute necessity for every disciple of Jesus to be a personal soul-winner.

"I am glad to be young to-day. I would not have lived in another day and generation for all the world. I feel it in my heart's blood that we are living in the days when Jesus Christ is waiting to do anything with those people of His who are just *willing*."

III

THE MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY

*" A Christless Cross no Gospel were for me.
A Crossless Christ my Saviour would not be.
But oh, Christ crucified I rest in Thee."*

Anon.

*" And so, for ice-cold hearts we pray,
Who hear and heed not, will not move
To come to Thee, or look Thy way,
Although Thou art all love.*

*Oh melt their snowfield, Love Divine ;
What is there that Thou canst not do ?
Thou who hast melted even mine,
Dear Saviour, melt theirs too."*

Amy Carmichael.

III

THE MESSAGE FOR TO-DAY

"I've been into the enquiry room seven times in seven different campaigns in this city, and I've gone back every time," a man once said to me.

Questioning him as to what really happened in those seven professions of conversion, I found that they had been nothing more than resolutions to try to live a better life. He had known reformation, but certainly not regeneration; he had come to repentance seven times, but never to faith. He was like some of the Ephesian converts who had known only "the baptism of John". He had turned over new leaves, but had never taken in a new life. He had tried to give up sin, but had never received the Saviour. It was a case of being "empty, swept and garnished", but unoccupied, so no wonder "the unclean spirit" had returned "with seven other spirits more wicked than himself", so that "the last state of that man was worse than the first".

Unfortunately, this is no isolated case. It reveals the tragedy of an evangelism which is superficial, because it lacks the real *Evangel*. But that is a word which few understand to-day.

The ministers of a large area had met in conference. The reports from each locality had been given. In a monotonous drone came the words, "Decrease", "Decrease", "Decrease", until depression settled upon the meeting like a pall. Suddenly a new note was struck, and brother ministers were startled when from one came a report of a substantial increase of membership on confession of faith.

Turning to the senior minister of that district, the Chairman asked if he could tell the delegates how this

had come about. Appearing embarrassed, he looked across at his junior minister who was in charge of a rural district, "I think Mr. — had better answer that question, for it is in his place, not mine, that this has happened." Rising from his seat, the young minister, who was rather despised for his old-fashioned evangelistic fervour, said humbly, "The explanation is just this; we have had a campaign, and the increase is due to the preaching of the Evangel."

For a moment there was silence, and then with a touch of sarcasm the Chairman asked, "And what do you mean by 'the Evangel'?"

The real trouble to-day is that so many who ought to be preaching this message cannot do so because they do not know it themselves, and therefore, much that goes by the name of evangelism is devoid of the real Evangel.

So perhaps it will not come amiss if I define it.

The Evangel is the good, glad news of God's free grace in Christ which brings sinful man into right relationship with God.

Paul says, "*I declare unto you the Gospel . . . which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.*" (1 Cor. 15: 3-4.)

The Gospel does two things; it informs men of the great facts, the great events—the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Resurrection; and then it invites men to share in the blessings which those events made possible. A Gospel address, therefore, may be defined as a declaration of the riches of God's grace, and an invitation to experience the sufficiency of Christ's saving power. It declares that God *came* into human form; that God in Christ *became* the sinner's Substitute, and that this Substitute *overcame* death and Hell. These facts—historic, proven and unassailable—constitute the sum and substance of the Gospel. They

were the basis of the Apostle Paul's invitation to share in all its promises, assurances, benefits and blessings for time and for eternity.

An evangelistic message is such that if a soul should hear the preacher only that once, he would shew how to be saved. Such an address does not merely denounce sin, or pronounce judgment; it announces salvation. There is no note of sadness or of terror in the Evangel itself. It is good, glad news. The New Testament writers used the word always to tell of the work of Christ in its first application to the needs of men. In Bunyan's phraseology it is the "wicket gate" into the Kingdom.

But the title of this chapter is "*The Message for To-day*". Now it is the glory of the Gospel that it is a message for every day. People talk about special gospels for special times. Modern gospels for a modern age. But there can be no new gospel. It is an eternal Gospel. Human nature never changes. Sin is a permanent factor in human life, and therefore the Gospel for sinners never alters in its essential message.

We hear a great deal about up-to-date preaching, but, as Dr. Rattenbury points out, "modernity is but a phase of humanity, and humanity does not change".

The genius of Bunyan was that, though he described the characters of his day, he was such an analyst of fundamental human nature that the names by which he called his characters apply to folk around us to-day, as much as they did in the seventeenth century. We still meet "Mr. Worldly-wiseman", "Mr. Ready to Halt", "Mr. Feeble-Minded", "Mr. Talkative", not to mention "Mrs. T."! They are eternal types, and it is just because John Bunyan had the power of giving seventeenth century dress to people who live in all centuries that his allegory is immortal.

So the Gospel is never out-of-date; it is applicable to the needs of every age.

On the other hand, while the Gospel never changes, the presentation of it may do so. A picture may be be-

queathed from father to son for many generations. The picture itself never changes, though probably its frame will. So while the Gospel of Christ meets the unchanging need of the human heart, it must be presented in terms which grip our own age, and be interpreted in such a way as to show its adequacy and application to the peculiar needs and problems of our times.

To grip youth to-day, our message must answer the great fundamental questions which they are asking.

A Word of Authority.

Youth is perplexed about this matter of faith. Wistfully many are asking, "What *am* I to believe?" With so little background of spiritual knowledge they have no firm belief. They see Christendom split into innumerable churches, sects, cults and "isms", so they sigh, "Which one is right?" No wonder they are impatient with organized religion as they see it. They are intolerant of dogma and doctrine, but they yearn for an assured faith. They want something reliable and reasonable. They demand a gospel which is not nebulous but definite; not vague but authoritative; not uncertain but sure. They will always listen to anyone who speaks with a note of assurance, and who sounds out a message of certitude and reality. That is why personal witness is so powerful to-day. When we can say with Paul, "I know Whom I have believed"; when we can speak of the reality of Christ's saving power in our own lives; when we can declare that "we have seen and do testify", we find our message "gets across". Such witness has in it the authentic note. It rings true. What modern youth wants more than anything else is reality.

But that is just the wonder of the Gospel. It has been tried and proved in the fires of experience, and verified in life again and again as the one sure and certain remedy for the ills of the soul of man. No one succeeds in evangelism who cannot speak with authority. The world is tired of

uncertainties. They surround us on every hand. Vague aspirations leave men cold, but they will listen when the preacher speaks out of a deep and profound conviction.

The Rev. Lionel Fletcher says, "If a man is not certain that God lives, that sin is real, and that Christ saves, he had better be a self-respecting stone-cracker, than an apologetic propounder of hesitating suggestions which are as stones to a hungry multitude."

A Message of Redemption.

Youth is perplexed about the problem of sin. Almost despairingly they ask, "How can I go straight?" Religion, if it is to be any use at all, must be something which can be lived out in workshop, home, office and factory. The Gospel which we bring to youth must be an answer to the old heart cry, "How can a young man cleanse his way?" A preacher who offers an answer to that question will always get a hearing. At bottom, youth wants to know, "Can Christ deal with my problem of sin?" It is useless to try to evangelize youth to-day without the full-orbed message of forgiveness from sin through the atoning sacrifice of the Cross, and victory over sin through the indwelling risen Christ.

Think of a cinema crowd of what we call "toughs" on a Sunday night. They had come, not to see pictures, but to attend an evangelistic meeting. The atmosphere was strange to them. Used as they were to larking, they thought they would play up at the evangelist's expense. The setting was in their favour, and the situation looked ugly. Someone said, "Send for the Police!" But no, there was another way to check their horse-play. Straight talking about sin gripped them, and gradually they became quiet. The "insubordinates" left, and the others settled down to listen. At the close many sought the Saviour. It was the message of Christ's power over sin that held them. If

the preacher had discoursed about theology, ethics, philosophy, or even that over-worked subject—psychology—there would have been pandemonium. Most probably he would have been hounded down, or whistled out; but the subject taken was so vital to their practical lives that they listened, though against their will.

There is too much preaching to-day which never gets beyond Jesus as an example. Moral essays, and ethical lectures cut no ice. They do not meet the real need of youth to-day, who are faced by such tremendous forces of evil. "Christianized psychology is no good for a moral outcast."

Some modern scholars have tried to draw a distinction between the Gospel *of* Jesus, and the Gospel *about* Jesus. By the former they mean what Jesus Himself taught, and by the latter, the "Pauline Gospel", which they reject. They fail to see the vital difference between the Gospel of the Kingdom and the Gospel of the Grace of God. Now, the Gospel of the Kingdom centres in Christ as King, and is found in His teachings; but the Jews rejected Him as their Messiah, so the Kingdom Age is yet to be, when Christ returns to reign. Meanwhile, we live in the Church Age, that is, from Pentecost to the Second Coming of our Lord, and in that age, because of the Cross and the Empty Tomb, the Gospel of the Grace of God is the primary message to preach. The Kingdom will never really come in until the King returns. Hence the barrenness of the preaching which simply urges youth to give its service "to bring in the Kingdom".

In a word, Jesus came into the world, not just to preach a Gospel, but that a Gospel might be preached. He Himself is greater than His teaching, and He has said, "The Son of Man came to give Himself a ransom for many." The fact is, there is no Gospel to-day without the Cross. "We are sent," as Hugh Thomson Kerr puts it, "not to preach sociology, but salvation; not reform but redemption; not culture but conversion; not progress but pardon; not the

new social order but the new birth; not a new organization but a new creation; not civilization but Christ. We are ambassadors, not diplomats."

A deaconess talking to a minister said, "I almost envy the workers of a generation ago, who could go to the lowest of the low, and tell them that because Jesus died for them they could have all their sins cleansed, and be enabled to live a new life." Then she added, "But of course you and I, as educated people, could not do that to-day!"

"Speak for yourself," was his reply.

"Well," she answered, "I wish I could find some other message which, as a cultured, modern woman, I could deliver, and yet which has in it the power of the old Gospel!"

Ah, well might she envy those old-fashioned workers whose message was Redemption by the Cross. Modern-trained workers have found nothing to equal it. Theirs is "another Gospel which is not another". They would do well to remember what Paul added, "Though we or an angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed!"

Dr. Samuel Chadwick once held a unique service in a church in Leeds. He specially invited sceptics. Over two thousand of them came. As he preached there were interruptions. Finally he stopped and said, "I observe that only about a dozen or so are objecting. I will dismiss the service. Those who are willing to discuss further with me, I shall be glad to meet face to face in my vestry." About nineteen men came. The debate went on, led by a brilliant lawyer. Then Dr. Chadwick said, "Suppose we grant that your scepticism will do all right for the man who has a comfortable income, a good social standing, and lives a moral life. What would you do, however, for the man who is broken by sin, helpless, hopeless and in despair?" The lawyer rose, walked over to Dr. Chadwick, put out his hand to him and said, "Sir, I should bring him

to you, for you have his only hope. You alone can tell him of a power which can change his life."

A Challenge to Service.

Youth is perplexed about the purpose of life. Eagerly they are asking, "What am I to do with my life?" "How can I make it worth while?" Many are disillusioned by the claims of the world. They want something better and more satisfying.

"I'm fed up with jazz," said a young radio mechanic. "I'm taking up politics. There are too many wrongs in the world for us to ignore them. I love beauty and nature. People are thinking too much of Hollywood, and not enough of the world's injustices."

Again—The scene is a drawing-room in Mayfair. About sixty young people of the educated, moneyed class have packed themselves in. There is scarcely any space for chairs. There are plenty of cigarettes and cocktails about. Then follow speeches, the speakers standing on a chair surrounded by this mass of intelligent, enquiring, sporting, well-to-do young men and women.

What is it all about? Politics! It is a challenge to service by a new political organization, and the appeal is to the highest qualities in youth, calling them to unite for the moral betterment of our country.

As I looked on I thought—Whatever may be achieved by a political party with high principles, how much more could be done if all this enthusiasm were harnessed to the chariot of Christ's cause.

A few nights later—I stood watching a crowd of young people pouring into a great hall in the City of London. Communism was calling them together. They were a motley crowd, mostly of the wage-earning class. The speakers found just as ready and eager a response, perhaps more so, and judging by the enthusiasm of the meeting,

there went out from that hall not far from a thousand propagandists.

But youth is also responding to the challenge of service in the cause of Christ.

A hundred young men on bicycles are assembling in an East London street. Why have they come? A campaign is being held in a near-by hall, and they are going to scour the neighbourhood to make it known. The leader, with inventive mind, has furnished them all with megaphones. Each bicycle and man carries a placard, and off they go in parties of four, to their assigned positions. The whole scheme is synchronized. Standing and facing north, south, east, and west, each of these quartets of men makes the announcement of the coming campaign. Then the whole hundred reassemble for an open-air meeting before going into the hall.

I give these pen pictures to illustrate how youth is attracted to-day by a call to service; but it must be a big call to big service. Nothing petty satisfies them. Youth presses in for a place in every progressive movement. It will give its best and most for an expedition out to conquer new territory, and explore new continents of opportunity.

When Shackleton wanted two volunteers to join his party for the South Pole, fifty thousand young men applied! Youth is fascinated by the challenge to some rugged task. If it presents difficulties the challenge is all the more inspiring. Youth responds to the lure of a big job which makes big demands upon its strength and courage. "Safety First" is a poor slogan for youth. The mistake which the Christian Church has too often made is in nursing and fussing over its young people. It has treated them too much as patients in a Convalescent Home, instead of calling upon them to be recruits in an advancing army. We must challenge them, therefore, to sacrifice, surrender and renunciation for Christ. We have a bigger cause to which to call them than any Hitler or Mussolini; we have a bigger enemy to overthrow, and a bigger task to achieve. What can make

a bigger appeal to youth than a vision of "world evangelization in this generation"?

In the newspaper this very morning, I read,

"On February 19th, 3,000 young people will march from various parts of the country into London on a National Youth Pilgrimage. When they arrive they will be greeted by 25,000 of London's youth in Trafalgar Square. Their purpose is to declare their belief in democracy and to pledge their service for freedom."

Can we not mobilize twenty-five thousand Christian youth "to declare their belief in the redeeming message of the Cross" and "to pledge their service" for the cause of Christ in the world. I believe many are waiting for a lead, and will respond to such a challenge.

We must not lose sight either, of the fact that this is an integral part of the Gospel. Christianity is not merely an assurance policy to take us to Heaven, it is a bowing of the knee to the Lordship of Christ.

Every effective evangelistic address, therefore, must sound out an appeal to the will. Its distinctive purpose is that it seeks to lead men, there and then, to make a choice between two masters—Self or Christ. Its aim is to get men "to sign on the dotted line". Someone has defined an evangelistic address as one which "provokes a crisis in a man's thinking". The evangelistic preacher is always out for a verdict. His message, therefore, appeals, urges, intreats, beseeches men not only to be reconciled to God, but also to consecrate all to His service.

If we leave dedication to be a subsequent experience to conversion we allow the devil a foothold, and hinder the convert from becoming an effective witness to the world.

Dr. Campbell Morgan says that at Pentecost "Confronting blind unbelief, flippant scepticism, idle curiosity, Peter said, 'Jesus is Lord.' So we have to confront this age with all its boasted advance, its loose sense of sin, its lowered standards of morality, its glamour and gaudiness, and say to it, 'There is one King, one Master, one Lord'."

5 The Message for To-day then should be a presentation of Christ in all His authority, redeeming power and challenging Kingship, that youth may find in Him the Sure Basis of their faith, the Strong Deliverer of their souls, and the Sovereign Lord of their lives.

IV

THE METHODS FOR TO-DAY

"Let it be distinctly understood that no method, however perfect, is substituted for power. The method is only the way in which intellectual, emotional, volitional and spiritual power is manifest. Method without power is a locomotive on the track without steam; power without method is the locomotive with steam in the boiler and pipe, but derailed and ploughing its path to its own destruction. Power manifests itself in method, but method is no substitute for power."

J. Wilbur Chapman.

IV

THE METHODS FOR TO-DAY

IN some quarters, the opinion is held that evangelism is dead.

"Things have so changed," some say, "that Gospel campaigns and widespread evangelism are things of the past."

The emphasis to-day is on education rather than on conversion. Some people blame the evangelists for their obscurantism, self-advertisement, sensationalism and superficiality. Perhaps in some cases there may be reasons for these criticisms, but such sweeping statements are superficial in themselves. The results of old-fashioned missions are too real and patent to be ignored. What has happened in the past is still happening to-day.

Admittedly the work is more difficult. In this materialistic age, the mass of the people are not interested in the concerns of the next world. They are engrossed rather in sport, pleasure and money making, "draining their lives of all higher enthusiasms", or as Dr. de Blois expresses it, "In these strenuous times, people are sophisticated and busy, and the eternal verities which are boorish and uncomfortable to the sleek and selfish man of to-day have been banished to a realm beyond the reach of his day-by-day life."

It has been my joy to preach the Evangel for over thirty years, but when I began, cinemas, public dance halls, dog-racing tracks, ice rinks and radio had scarcely been heard of. People were not so preoccupied, and life was not so hectic. Even motor-cars were comparatively rare. Theatre opening on Sundays was unknown. There were no football pools nor organized ballots such as we have to-day. People were, therefore, ready for fresh interests, and the coming of an

evangelist created curiosity. Because of all these things, humanly speaking, a crowd is not so easily gathered to-day, and really permanent results are more difficult to obtain.

Quite recently a hundred evangelists, to whom a questionnaire was sent, admitted that evangelistic work is becoming more difficult, and that the number of converts is distressingly small.

For all that, evangelism is by no means dead. It is showing great signs of life. The Gospel has just as much power as ever it had. Men are still lost, beaten, dissatisfied and seeking. They still need the Saviour, and the Saviour is still seeking them. So long as the Holy Spirit continues "to strive with man" He will need His messengers.

This does not mean that we are necessarily to use the same methods in evangelism as were used a generation ago. The methods may have to be changed, though the Message never does. We must not, however, confuse evangelism with a particular type of effort which, for want of a better term, we may call "revivalism" or "mass evangelism". Methods must not be worshipped, nor considered indispensable. People are apt to get wedded to methods. Dr. de Blois says, "one of our biggest difficulties lies with the obstinate and elderly saints who regard these methods as the only and divinely appointed way of salvation."

I remember in one place, an old deacon in a Praise Service deploring that he had seen no "penitential tears". He evidently thought that no one could be converted without "a penitent form". As a matter of fact, if he had peeped into a small vestry just before the meeting, he would have seen some "tears"! But modern young people will not parade their "penitence". Some of the finest cases of conversion show no tears, but in cold blood come to the transaction apart from any emotional appeal in a meeting.

I believe this new age calls for new forms of evangelism. We may need to return to some of the older methods, but also to adopt new ones. I am not suggesting that mass evangelism is altogether a thing of the past, but because

it has become more difficult, and many of the very people we long to reach are prejudiced against it, we need, under the Holy Spirit's guidance, to be inventive of other ways and means of reaching the lost to-day.

A case comes to my mind of a country town where the young people of a certain church thought they should try to evangelize their district. On a given night they went to the "Square" and held an open-air meeting, but unfortunately the night that suited them did not seem to suit the populace, so hardly anyone came. The few who did venture near the ring soon fled, fearing to be seen by their friends! This having failed, those earnest young people thought they would try indoors, so they hired the local hall. The "toughs" crowded in, hooted and yelled, and smashed all that they could lay their hands on, so the authorities refused the use of the hall for any more services. Finally, those young people tried the Parish Church Hall, but not an unconverted person would come near, and the effort became nothing more than another devotional meeting for young Christians.

Granted, those young people were earnest, zealous and true to the Gospel, but when it came to method, they completely failed to find one that was effective in their town. It was a case of "zeal without knowledge". One cannot help grieving over such efforts which fail to meet the situation, and only give the impression to lookers-on that the Gospel is out-of-date. It is most discouraging to young workers, too, when this kind of thing happens.

Thank God, young Christians to-day are beginning to see their responsibilities regarding evangelism, and are not content to leave it all to the whole-time worker; but is there no need for some guidance as to the best ways of doing the work? For the sake of those who perhaps, like the group I mention, are discouraged, and also for the sake of many who are not called to serve in Mass Evangelism, but, who can do invaluable service by more unconventional methods, I will suggest some ways which may be effective to-day.

Open-Air Work.

Of course this is no new method, but there are new ways of doing it. Our Lord believed in it. Nearly all His ministry was in the open-air. We think of the Sermon on the Mount, and the talks by the seaside. In times of spiritual power, the Church has always made use of this means of Gospel propaganda. From Pentecost down to the present day some of the most effective work has been done in the open-air. Wycliffe during the Reformation sent his poor preachers all over the land. In the eighteenth century the Evangelical Revival was spread by the open-air preaching of Whitfield and the two Wesleys.

In these days when the man-in-the-street very much prefers the street to the church, this type of evangelism has become more essential than ever. Earnestness, sincerity and self-forgetfulness impress him more than oratory. When he sees a young fellow like himself speaking from his very heart about the Saviour, he will listen, when perhaps wild horses would not drag him to church.

But we need to rethink, and, in some cases, revise our methods. There are some things which this same man-in-the-street very much dislikes, and they are all too often found in open-air meetings. Perhaps one of the most frequent is *ranting*. When a speaker yells at his audience as though they were all deaf, and hurls texts at them as though he were hurling bricks, or talks crudely of sacred things, can he wonder that folk do not stay to listen?

A fiery Irishman, with a voice like a bull, was shouting the Gospel to a crowd years ago in Co. Dublin. The pitch chosen for the meeting was situated about five miles from a place known as Ballsbridge. A farmer in the crowd with an apparently vacant face, but an Irish twinkle in his eye, after listening for some time to the tirade, crept up close to the speaker, pulled his coat tails and said in a husky whisper, "Hush! Hush, man! There's a woman dying in Ballsbridgel" whereat the crowd burst into derisive laughter.

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So much for the spiritual impression made by that speaker!

One way of avoiding ranting is by the use of megaphones, or of course better still, the wireless van. These enable the speaker to use a perfectly natural voice. Nowadays, everyone is so accustomed to the amplified voice, that it does not detract from the message, but rather helps it. With a little practice, speaking through the megaphone is quite simple. It helps the speaker to pronounce his words naturally and slowly, so that he can use impressive and serious tones without shouting.

Another of the weaknesses of open-air work is that so often the message has been quite unprepared. Many young speakers seem to think that for pulpit work, preparation is necessary, but that for the open-air meeting, anything will do. As a matter of fact, in these days one needs almost more prayer and careful preparation for the open-air crowd, which is so largely cynical and critical, not to say sceptical, than for the average indoor congregation, which is generally sympathetic. The very fact that an open-air address must be brief makes the careful planning of it all the more important.

Of course, it goes without saying that any flippancy or inattention or irreverence among the workers is unpardonable, also unpreparedness as to programme or equipment.

The singing should be really good. Ragged, squeaky singing is only the object of ridicule. Unless there are enough singers to make the hymns go well, it is better to have none at all. A friend of mine has run open-air meetings entirely alone with great effect. Political speakers get their crowd in the parks and street corners without a choir, but they are careful to have their workers among the people distributing literature.

One of the best ways to draw a crowd is for two Christians to start a discussion between themselves. People will always listen to two men having an argument!

Prayer should take place among the workers before going

out, but as a rule, prayer in the meeting should be left to the very end. In order to "draw in the net", every worker should be supplied with "Decision" booklets or Gospels, and the leader should invite seekers to come and ask for them at the close. This leads to valuable personal work.

I recently heard of a most effective method by which certain streets were reached in turn. One street was chosen each week, and on an evening previous to the meeting the workers visited every home with an attractive handbill announcing the open-air, and giving the detailed programme, which set out all the items, including solos, quartettes, male voice choir, besides witnesses and address. People were urged to keep the evening free, and come along. The suggestion was made that they should bring out their chairs, if they liked, so that they could sit and enjoy the meeting. Of course this can only be done where there is no traffic! The result was a crowded gathering which settled down as though they were in an ordinary service. But it was not *ordinary*. On a summer evening in a quiet street this plan is most effective.

Unconventional Evangelism.

In these days, when the unconverted are critical of churches, methods of an unconventional type are essential, and more likely to succeed. This is an age of informality. The free-and-easy is popular. Young people dread an atmosphere where they feel out of place. This is one reason why it is so hard to get the masses to enter a church. They feel like fish out of water, for they are out of their usual element. This being so, we must find an element in which they will feel at home. Now the easiest place in which to feel at home is in a home. After all, Pentecost began there, and we must rediscover the value of homes for spreading the Gospel.

Years ago in country districts, cottage meetings were popular and mightily blessed. There are many young people

who are far more likely to listen to a Gospel message round a fire than in a pew! What appeals undoubtedly to youth to-day is the informal, homely, non-professional approach, and if we are to find our point of contact we must use this method whenever possible. What are called "Squashes" are most popular. Some people are mystified by that word, and wonder however it came to be used. Its history is that at the Cambridge University a certain vicar used to invite undergraduates to his home for simple talks and discussions on Sunday evenings. Coffee and biscuits were handed round, and so many came that his room was packed to such an extent that these informal meetings came to be known as "The Vicar's Squashes". Since then any meeting of that nature is usually called a "Squash".

Whilst urging informality, I am not unmindful of the need for reverence. Of course that is essential. I have seen many "Squashes" which were as intense, solemn and devotional as any service in a church. Of course they could never take the place of church services, but they often lead up to them. The great value is that they make personal conversations easy and natural, whereas the tragedy of so many churches is that no one is ever spoken to personally about his soul. Under certain conditions discussions are useful at "Squashes", though a wise chairman is essential. No arguments should be allowed, and people should be kept to the point which must be a vital one.

There may or may not be singing at "Squashes". Sometimes Team Witness is valuable, or there may be a straightforward address. As in the case of the Open-Air Meeting, prayer is best at the end.

The powerful thing about such meetings is the personal touch which they create. The non-Christian receives a personal invitation card, or is brought by a friend as a friend. I know of one district where no Christian is supposed to come unless he brings a non-Christian with him.

Young people appreciate the human touch these days. The world is a cold, callous place, and because of this,

many have put on a hard exterior, but in the warm friendly atmosphere of a home this pose can often be *melted*. Fellowship takes the place of loneliness, and this can prove the way to the hearts of those who seem at first so careless.

This is the secret of the success of House Parties and Holiday Camps as places where so many are led to the Saviour. Put a really unconverted young fellow in a crowd of keen, consistent, young Christians, and the impact of their lives is tremendous, so different from anything he has ever experienced before, that the appeal of Christ through them is almost irresistible.

Most earnestly, therefore, I urge evangelism by unconventional methods.

Team Evangelism.

By a team I mean a carefully selected party who are absolutely one in outlook, message and spirit, among whom there is increasingly forged a very close link of fellowship in the Gospel. In such a team there would naturally have to be a leader, someone of riper experience, who would study the distinctive qualities of the members of his team, and direct their energies accordingly. The team should also contain a capable pianist, a leader of praise, one or two Gospel soloists, one or two who could give a word of witness, while the main address would be given by the leader. Such teams can be formed of young people in business, and they can be used for long week-ends, or in ten-day campaigns in churches and mission halls. Let me suggest some advantages of team evangelism.

It is in accord with the trend of our age. In the sports world the team is idolized. In the commercial world this is an age of combines, unions and amalgamations. In the political world it is a day of federations, leagues and pacts. In the religious world the team idea is steadily gaining ground, and we see Student Campaigns and other such teams doing splendid work for God.

It is powerful in its impact. The masses to-day are terribly pre-occupied. The problem is to awaken any interest in the coming of a special mission. Cinemas, dance-halls, cars, wireless and a hundred-and-one other things claim people's time and interest. But the coming of a team awakens interest, excites curiosity, creates gossip and so arouses attention.

It is diversified in its action. There are varieties of personnel in a team—different types of people, different denominations, gifts, experiences, education and social standing. That means that the leader can use his team to touch all types of people in his audience. Each member of the team will make his own contacts. Where one might fail, another will probably succeed. People to-day are also often more impressed by the non-professional than by the professional preacher. There will also be a variety of activities. A team can undertake many things that the evangelist could not do alone, such as open-air witness before the evening meeting, house-to-house canvassing, drawing-room squashes, children's meetings, etc.

It is thorough in its results. The thoroughness of all mission work depends largely on the way in which enquirers are dealt with. A team, provided it is rightly trained by its leader, can become of great service in this side of the work. It means that practically every enquirer can be dealt with personally, and that team members can keep in touch with all with whom they come in contact during campaigns. An enquirer who feels that one person in the team would not understand his case has the chance of turning to someone else. Likewise a member of the team who feels that one enquirer is too difficult for him, can enlist the help of another team worker perhaps more fitted in some way for that particular condition of need.

It is an ideal training for young Christians. Such a scheme as this offers a scope for all young Christians who want to become useful in Christ's service. They will learn from each other's mistakes as well as successes. It will be the

means of discovering gifts and powers of leadership. It will lead some out into whole-time service at home and abroad. The prayer fellowship and evangelistic comradeship and team spirit will produce development of Christian life, and the opportunities of witness and personal work will all be valuable as a training for future Christian service.

For such work, some kind of training is essential, either by means of Correspondence Bible Courses, or in Schools of Evangelism. No one can succeed who does not know his job. This applies to every walk of life; most of all to evangelism. The best way, however, to learn a thing is to do it, first perhaps in a small way, and then, as experience is gained, larger opportunities will come. Remember the first "Team" was composed of a few untaught fishermen, but they lived in fellowship with "The Master", so they learnt from Him how to work. Only so can we be fitted for our work.

Printed Evangelism.

We live in an age of propaganda, and every cause is advanced by means of the printed page. But how amazingly has the art of printing changed in our day. I have just been reading an article in a London evening paper urging the Government to show more *drive* in the National Service Appeal. The writer says, "There seems to be little realization of the way the technique of propaganda has changed in the last generation. The old crude methods will not do to-day. Posters may only raise a smile. Slogans by themselves will not convince. I would call in the best advertising brains in the country, men whose business it is to know just how to appeal to the public."

If the Government needs this advice, how much more does the Christian Church?

For years past, a neighbouring theatre has been most anxious to interest me in its various plays. Attractive folders and brochures constantly reach me through the

post. Besides these, Night Clubs, Turf Agents, Wine Merchants, Tobacconists and innumerable stores pour in their literature until my waste-paper basket bulges. Their zeal shames me. With what skill their printed matter is drafted, and how attractive is the "lay out". Comparing such things with the average tract, one feels outclassed at every turn. It is high time that "the children of light" were as wise as the children of this generation in pushing their wares.

What amazing results have come, however, from wisely and prayerfully-placed books and tracts! One of the outstanding early Keswick speakers, Prebendary Webb-Peploe, was converted through a tract on his way to the races.

Nearly three hundred years ago a pedlar gave a tract to a man called Richard Baxter. Through reading it he was brought to Christ. He wrote *A Call To The Unconverted*. Among the thousands who were saved through it was Philip Doddridge, who wrote the *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*. This fell into the hands of William Wilberforce, the emancipator of the slaves in the British Colonies, and led him to Christ. Wilberforce wrote *A Practical View of Christianity* which fired the heart of Leigh Richmond. He wrote *The Dairyman's Daughter*, four million copies of which were circulated in fifty different languages. A lady gave one to an actor who, through reading it was led to the Saviour. He became a famous American minister through whose influence Russel H. Conwell was led into the ministry, and thus the great Baptist Temple in Philadelphia, the Samaritan Hospital, and Temple College with its six thousand students are all traceable to one leaflet placed prayerfully in the hands of another person. Other results followed that pedlar's witness, including the opening of New Guinea to the Gospel through Thomas Chalmers.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters for thou shalt find it after many days" is specially true of printed evangelism. I do not think we are using this method nearly enough

these days, and when it is used, so often it is spoiled in its effectiveness by badly printed, and sometimes ill-chosen tracts, books and placards.

One day in an Underground train opposite to me sat a text-carrier. Now I know the Word of God is powerful, but surely He does mean us to use it with discrimination. This good brother—all honour to him for his zeal—was displaying the words in very ugly black type, "How wilt thou do in the swellings of Jordan?" As I watched the faces of my fellow passengers, I could not help being amused at their reactions. One could see their mystification at these cryptic words. "Swellings of Jordan? What on earth does that mean?" was written all over them. I fear they were not so familiar with the book of Jeremiah as our good brother! Certainly no spiritual effect was produced upon their minds.

We must use common sense in our efforts, and think of things from the point of view of those whom we are trying to reach. On the other hand, we need to guard against the use of printed matter which is so vague and nebulous as to convey no vital message.

Mr. A. Lindsay Glegg tells of a "Way-Side Pulpit" outside a Church where he was to preach. The announcement of his coming was placed alongside it, so that passers-by read, "Mr. A. Lindsay Glegg will preach here next Sunday. Don't worry, it may never happen!"

With what care Christian Science bills are worded, and how assiduously all the false cults disseminate their literature. Oh that Christ's followers were as zealous and as wise! Here is a form of ministry in which many could engage, who perhaps feel that they are not gifted for public work.

Personal Evangelism.

In these days of suspicion, if not prejudice towards churches and evangelistic meetings, we need more than ever to re-discover the power of the personal touch.

With what infinite tact and wisdom Christ dealt with souls. He had no stock formula for everyone. He studied individual needs.

So must we.

We are living in a day of mass-production, mass movements, corporate action, totalitarian and communal ideas, and there is grave danger of overlooking the value of individual souls. A business girl remarked the other day, "I work on a machine, and they seem to think of me as a machine." It is true. The tendency is to cheapen individual life. Not so with Christ. He went out of His way to reach one soul again and again.

The weakness in the work of the Christian Church in our day is an over-reliance upon services and meetings, in spite of the fact that the majority of people are unwilling to attend them. Although this method has obviously proved inadequate, many churches have no other way of reaching souls. We need, therefore, to discover another method, and that undoubtedly is by personal witness in the course of everyday life. After all, the Divine command was not "Come to church", but "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

That word *preach* suggests not a public utterance, but an unstudied testimony to individuals. It is increasingly evident in our evangelistic meetings to-day that those who are brought to Christ have been previously influenced by personal effort. Someone's consistent personal witness has led those souls to seek for higher things.

A book by Dr. J. E. Conant entitled *Every Member Evangelism* has made a profound impression upon my own thinking on this subject. He says, "The lost are not coming to church. They never did come in any great numbers, and to-day, in spite of all our modern methods and frantic appeals, they are coming in smaller and smaller numbers. Indeed it frequently happens that after a most appealing evangelistic message, it is found that very few unsaved are in the audience at all." He then shows that the failure

is due to the fact that we are relying too much upon preaching, and not enough upon personal work.

He cites the following instances. A certain church was long without an ingathering. Then he organized one hundred and forty teams of four each, who by personal effort reached one hundred and fifty-three souls for Christ in sixty days. In another church which had not had a conversion for years, the people were roused to personal endeavour, and went after their friends individually. This resulted in thirty-two decisions in one evening.

In another case, for four years personal evangelism was stressed, resulting in eleven hundred and fifty-eight coming into the church, nine hundred and seventy-four of whom were the result of personal soul-winning. In yet another church, the church officers led the way in personal work, and the membership grew from six hundred to twenty-one hundred in a little over four years.

Dr. Conant tells of a Presbyterian Church that for over a year had been without a conversion. The Pastor called the Session together, and offered to resign. The officials strongly objected, and said that they were being edified, and there was no need for his resignation. "*Edified for what?*" asked the Pastor.

In the conversation that followed he turned to the chairman of the Session and asked, "Do you believe that through you a soul has ever been saved?" "No," was the reply, and all the rest of the board had to give the same answer. Then the Pastor said, "Unless the Lord gives us souls in the near future, I shall ask that you also resign as the elders of this church."

"But we are getting along very well," they said. "No, we are not getting along at all," said the Pastor. Then he got them on their knees where they dedicated themselves to the work of soul-winning.

This was on Saturday night. On Monday morning the chairman of the Session spoke to his confidential clerk and said, "How long have you worked for me, Bob?" "Fifteen years, Sir," was the reply.

Then he said, "I am an elder in the church you attend, but I fear you are not a Christian, and I have known it all the time, and yet have never said a word to you about it. But my soul is on fire now, and I want that we both get down and give ourselves to Christ. I will do it for greater consecration, and you for salvation."

The young man knelt and received Christ then and there, and that elder led ten others to accept Christ that day. The other elders were doing the same thing, and the next Sunday over thirty who had been led to the Saviour through their witness were welcomed into the church.

"*Edified for what?*" This is a searching test. One thinks of thousands of Christians even in our keenest churches and mission halls who flock to hear their pet preachers at Conventions, and can talk piously amongst themselves, but only rarely do they ever try to win an individual soul to Christ. We have multitudes who are listening to the Gospel, Sunday by Sunday, who support their church and missionary societies, who insist on *sound* preaching, and are shocked by any modernism or ritualism, yet as personal soul-winning in the course of daily life is never attempted.

An American Christian doctor said to me once, "Some people can smell heresy a hundred miles away, but they can't detect one unconverted man who sits right alongside them."

We have often heard Spurgeon described as the "prince of preachers". He was an outstanding harvester of souls, but there was another reason for his success besides his preaching. Every year in the Metropolitan Tabernacle in a solemn dedication service, three thousand people came forward to take his hand renewing their pledge to be personal soul-winners. The result was that whenever Spurgeon preached, the great church was thronged not only with Christians, but with many of the unsaved who had been brought there by the workers, who, in their homes and places of work, had sought to prepare for, and follow up, his preaching by their quiet efforts with people alone.

I believe the solution of the evangelistic problem lies more than ever in personal soul-winning.

How many of us feel with Richard Baxter when he wrote, "I remember no one sin that my conscience doth so much accuse and judge me for, as doing so little for the saving of men's souls, and dealing no more fervently with them for conversion."

A missionary once wrote, "Out in India, in the mountains, I have heard in the twilight hour a call from the ridge below. Away through the stillness comes the call, and from the ridge above me comes a response. And then I hear in a moment more a faint call from a far ridge, away up and beyond, sounding almost like a distant echo. What did it mean? It meant that the man close above me was passing the word from the man below to the man beyond. The man below could never have reached the other man except for the man who stood on the middle ridge and passed the message on."

To you who read this, I would say there is a man down there, who will never hear "the Man" up there, unless you become the man on the middle ridge.

V

THE MOTIVES WHICH INSPIRE

*" With a soul blood-bought, and a heart aglow,
Redeemed of the Lord and free ;
I ask as I pass down the busy street,
Is it only a crowd I see ;
Do I lift my eyes with a careless gaze,
That pierces no deep down woe,
Have I nought to give to the teeming throng
Of the wealth of the love I know ?*

*Let me look at the crowd as my Saviour did
Till mine eyes with tears grow dim ;
Let me look till I pity the wandering sheep,
And love them for love of Him.*

*Dear Lord, I ask for the eyes that see
Deep down to the world's sore need.
I ask for a love that holds not back,
That pours out itself indeed.
I want a passionate power of prayer
That yearns for the great crowd's soul,
I want to go 'mong the fainting sheep,
And tell them, my Lord makes whole."*

Mrs. R. A. Jarvie.

THE MOTIVES WHICH INSPIRE

GEORGE ELIOT once said, "What makes life dreary is absence of motive. What makes life intricate is multiplicity of motive. What makes life victorious is singleness of motive."

"*One thing I do*"—"Necessity is laid upon me"—"*Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel*". In such words as these the Apostle Paul expressed his singleness of motive. His all-engrossing desire was to bring glory to Christ, and He achieved this by being "all things to all men, that by all means he might save some". Was there ever such a flaming evangelist as Paul? Listen to him! "I labour", "I strive", "I yearn", "I suffer", "I travail", "I spend and am spent". Did anyone ever embody the Calvary spirit for lost souls as Paul did? In comparison with him, how slow and slack we are; how dull and dilatory; how apathetic and phlegmatic! We need more fervour in the *sole* as well as in the soul! Not only is the *Look Out Committee* needed, but the *Go Out Committee* is required even more.

The real trouble to-day is not only the non-churchgoing masses, but the *non-masses-going* Christians. What we need is a walking as well as a talking religion.

What then were the motives which inspired Paul in his passionate devotion and sacrificial service for his Lord?

The Motive of Indebtedness—A Look Back.

In his first letter to Timothy, the aged Apostle allowed the young man a peep into his very heart when he said, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord . . . for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained

mercy . . . and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant . . .” (1 Tim. 1: 12-14.)

He was overwhelmed with the wonder of God’s grace in first saving him, and then commissioning him. That even “the chief of sinners” should have obtained mercy filled him with such overflowing gratitude, that he must serve such a Saviour.

To what extent, I wonder, is our service the real expression of our indebtedness for all that Christ has done for us? What were we before He saved us? What would we have become if He had not sought and found us? What evil habits would have gripped us? What worldly pleasures seduced us? What sinful indulgences debased us? What fleshly appetites enslaved us? What hellish temptations defeated us? Where would we have been had it not been for our Saviour?

*“A Man of Sorrows amongst us came.
An outcast Man and lonely.
But He looked on me, and through all my years,
Him must I serve—Him only.”*

When we think of all that He has done, is doing and promises yet to do, what else can we do but seek to lead others into “this grace wherein we stand and rejoice”.

An oculist once opened a consulting-room in the City of London. It was a bold venture, for he had no friends nor patrons. He had a hard struggle for some time. Then one day he saw a blind man in the road. Looking into his eyes he said, “Why don’t you have your eyesight restored?” It was the old story—“Tried everything. . . . Spent all I have. . . . Of no avail.” “Come with me to my consulting-room,” said the oculist. It proved to be by no means a hopeless case. An operation was performed successfully, and the man’s sight was restored. “What can I do?” he said, “I have no money to pay you.” “Oh yes!” said the oculist, “you can pay me.” “No, Sir, indeed I cannot. I have spent my all.” “You can pay

me in this way," was the reply. "You can tell everyone you meet that you were blind, but that I gave you your sight." The man did this, and the oculist's fame began to spread. In the end he got to the "top of the tree" in his profession.

Can we be so ungrateful that we never try to get another blind sinner to come to the divine oculist? Surely Christ saved us to make us soul-winners.

Gibbon, the historian, attributes the rapid spread of Christianity in its earlier years to the fact that "it was the most sacred duty of a new convert to diffuse among his friends the inestimable blessings he himself had received."

During the time of the revival in Korea, no one was allowed into church membership until he had brought someone else to the Saviour. At the present time, the same rule prevails in parts of South America. One man waited nine years before he could win his first soul, and so become eligible for baptism. Would a business house continue to support, pay the expenses and salary of a traveller who did not get one order during the year? Is it not just as much expected of us to make it the business of our lives to win souls?

The lack of such effort is the result of a poor sense of indebtedness.

Animals sometimes have more sense of gratitude than human beings. A man once saw a dog limping outside his house. He went out and brought it in, and found a thorn deeply embedded in the dog's foot. He brought some food, and won the dog's confidence, and then gently removed the thorn. In his own way that dog said, "Thank you", and trotted off. Several days later, the man returned from his office to find his friend in the porch wagging his tail and barking his greeting. There was no longer any limp, and he had come to show his gratitude. But the man soon found that another dog was waiting there. He too was lame, and his friend had brought him to the one who had healed his foot. Who says that dogs don't understand!

Because he had found where help was obtainable, he wanted another to find it too.

The Motive of Compassion—A Look Out.

Paul's sense of the need of the lost literally burned in his soul. No wonder he said, "Necessity is laid upon me . . . woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." (1 Cor. 9: 16.) And again, "The love of Christ constraineth me." (2 Cor. 5: 14.)

This compassion constrained him to risk everything if only souls might be saved. He sacrificed social prestige, financial gain, worldly honours, and a distinguished career. He could have had them all, but he esteemed them as refuse for the sake of souls. No renunciation was too great, and no toil too arduous if only he could "save some".

In the early records of his Christian life we read, "Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus to seek Paul". What was Paul doing there? It was his old University town. He had gone back to testify and try to win to Christ his former college friends. Not easy! But such a motive of compassion makes difficult things gloriously possible. It costs to stand up among old friends and confess Christ. To what extent have we done it? Impossible! Do you say? General William Booth said, "God loves with a special love the man who has a passion for the impossible." After all, why think it so impossible? Others, no more gifted or talented or clever than you are, have done it.

The story is told of a certain overseas bishop who was asked to visit a clergyman who was discouraged in his work.

"Do you remember long years ago a girl called Mary . . . ?" asked the bishop.

"Yes," was the reply. "I do. I prepared her for Confirmation and I had great hope for her future, but she went into the country to work for a farmer, who with his family was notorious for his irreligion and evil ways."

"Yes, that is so," said the bishop. "And the worst of the sons was the eldest one. But before Mary had been a month in the place her influence began to tell, and she started to teach the boys what she had learnt in the Confirmation Classes. Ultimately the eldest son was converted, went to a theological college and was ordained. Then he went back, sought out Mary, married her, and I am Mary's husband!"

If then God could use one humble girl in such a home, can He not use you? The thing is not impossible, but have we enough compassion to attempt it? When this motive grips our souls, we know something of the secret which dominated the life of Lilius Trotter of the Algiers Mission Band, of whom it was said, "She seemed at home with the impossible."

Think of the cities of the world: London, New York, Paris, and Calcutta, besides so many others with their teeming multitudes of never-dying souls. Think of the villages of the world, untouched, unreached with the Gospel of Christ even in so-called Christian lands, not to mention the closed lands, shut against the preaching of the Cross. In them, too, souls are passing out into eternity without God and without hope.

Do we profess to love and serve Christ? Are we constrained by the compassion of Christ?

If only we realized the infinite value of one soul, we would not hesitate to try to win them. Men think so much of gold. They will go to all lengths to gain it, but what is gold in comparison with a soul? One of the richest spots on earth is Johannesburg. It is rich because of its apparently limitless supplies of gold. But think of that wealth plus all the pearls of the South Seas and all the diamonds of the East. Think of the jewels of the world, and the treasures of State, and then you would not have reached the value of a single soul. "*We were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.*" (1 Pet. 1: 18-19.)

*"Say, knowest thou what it is or what thou art?
Knowest thou the importance of a soul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory of the stars.
Amazing pomp, worlds on worlds,
Ten thousand add and twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole—One soul outweighs them all."*

In his book, *Passion for Souls*, Dr. Jowett wrote, "I can take up my morning newspaper, which is oft times a veritable cupful of horrors, and it does not add one single tang to my feast; the dark record does not haunt the day with the mingled wails of the orphaned and the damned. Oh, I don't know how any Christian service is to be fruitful if we are not baptized in the spirit of a suffering compassion. We need afresh the vision of Christ, bearing on His own heart the sorrows and sins of this weary world with all its weight of woe."

In a religious magazine someone wrote a parable on earth connections in radio reception. He said, "Many amateur wireless workers fail at first to realize the importance of the earth connection. They quite understand that they must have a good aerial. But the connection with the earth they regard as a matter of little concern. In fact, many who give up the attempt to get clear reception as hopeless have the solution close at hand in a better 'earth'. The principle is the same as with electricity. Electric currents will take possession only where they can pass through. So with the wonderful waves which are transmitted from the Broadcasting Station; they will not enter where they cannot pass on to the earth. If not connected with the earth, your set will receive nothing.

"So it is in the spiritual world. Of course we need a good aerial. We fail absolutely if we neglect our devotional exercises. By use of the means of grace, we must put ourselves into the position to receive the messages from Heaven. But our prayer-life is futile unless it leads to service. There must be earth connection, for God does not bestow His best gifts to those who would be selfish with them. Like

the waves of the wireless, so the good things of God come to us in proportion as they can pass through us to the blessing of others."

What are our *earth connections*?

With a world lying in the wicked one; with need all around us staring us out of all countenance; with young lives rushing on to death and doom; have we no compassion? Jesus always had a good *earth connection*. "When He beheld the multitude He was moved with compassion and He healed their sick."

The Motive of Anticipation—A Look On.

After fifty-seven verses about "the Blessed Hope", in his famous fifteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians, Paul concludes with "Therefore be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." He looked on, and the anticipation of coming glory filled him with a holy fervour for service and witness-bearing. The prospect of the glorious results which awaited both him and the souls he won was ever a powerful incentive to his ministry.

Every soul-winner finds a deep satisfaction in this work here and now, but even that is faint in comparison with the richer joy which awaits us on the Day of Rewards.

A man stood watching a fisherman one day on the banks of a river. The sport was good, and catch after catch was landed. "What does it feel like to catch a fish?" called out the onlooker. For a moment there was no reply. The fisherman was busy landing another trout. Then he said, "I'll tell you what it feels like to catch a fish—when you have caught one, you feel you want to catch another!"

The joy in the heart of those who have just found salvation is but faint compared with the sheer thrill of winning one's first soul. Then what will be the joy and the reward in Glory awaiting the faithful soul-winner! In the

book of Daniel we have a glimpse of the future, when we read, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (*Dan. 12: 3.*)

What a prospect! That you perhaps, who are young, despised and ridiculed, unpopular and persecuted, will shine in the lasting abiding splendour and glory of the stars for ever and ever, because you win souls.

It was a cold morning. Passengers arrived at the station with coats well buttoned up. At the barrier stood the ticket-collector to see each ticket. On many mornings they were allowed to slip through without showing them, and they were not pleased to be stopped that day. "You don't seem to be very popular this morning," said someone to the collector. "No, they don't think much of me here, but they do at the Head Office. That's why they put me on this job."

What does the Lord think of us *at the Head Office*? Does He see faithfulness? Can He trust us with a difficult job? What a tragedy if any of us should get to Heaven, and for all eternity never find a soul whom we have led there. But what joy to hear His "Well done", because we have been faithful in the work of evangelism.

On the other hand, remember our Lord taught that there would be a variety of rewards. Some will have the "Well done" for faithfulness. Success will not be the only thing considered. But some who hide their talent in the earth will have no reward. Oh, the remorse in those hearts when they hear, "Thou oughtest . . . unprofitable servant."

"'Curse ye Meroz,' said the angel of the Lord.
What has Meroz done? Nothing!
Why then is Meroz to be cursed?
Because he did nothing!
What ought Meroz to have done?
Come to the help of the Lord.
Could not the Lord do without Meroz?
The Lord did do without Meroz.

Did the Lord sustain any loss?
No, but Meroz did.
Is then Meroz to be cursed?
Yes! and that bitterly."

(Judges 5: 23.)

*"I dare not idle stand,
While upon every hand
The whitening fields proclaim the harvest near;
A gleaner I would be,
Gathering, dear Lord, for Thee,
Lest I with empty hand at last appear.*

*I dare not idle stand,
While on the shifting sand,
The ocean casts bright treasures at my feet;
Beneath some shell's rough side
The tinted pearl may hide,
And I with precious gift my Lord may meet.*

*I dare not idle stand,
While over all the land
Poor, wandering souls need humble help like mine;
Brighter than brightest gem
In monarch's diadem,
Each soul a star in Jesu's crown may shine.*

*I dare not idle stand,
But at my Lord's command,
Labour for Him throughout my life's short day;
Evening will come at last,
Day's labour all be past,
And rest eternal my brief toil repay."*

VI

SOME ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

*" Pure fire of God burn out my sin,
Cleanse all the earthly dross from me ;
Refine my secret heart within,
The golden streams of love set free !
Live Thou in me, O Life divine,
Until my deepest love be Thine."*

Tersteegen.

VI

SOME ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

IN these days of specialization, qualifications are more essential than ever before. In every calling and profession the tendency is to raise the standard, and to accept none but those who are sufficiently trained and equipped to measure up to it. To-day examinations are stiffer, tests more severe, and requirements more exacting for any career which youth seeks to enter. The motorist must pass his test, the doctor must qualify, the schoolmaster must obtain his degree, and the applicant for any post of responsibility must be up to standard, if he wishes to succeed.

The higher and more noble the service, the more exacting the qualifications required. Therefore, for all who would enter upon the sacred task of evangelism, the Word of God sets a very high standard. If the preceding chapters have stirred our hearts with the desire to be used to the salvation of souls, let us now examine ourselves to see how far we are worthy to take a share in such a task. We may well ask, "Who is worthy?" (*Rev. 5: 2*). Only through Him Who "was slain, and has redeemed us to God by His blood", are we fitted for Christ's service. Unless we have had "the blessed ordination of the pierced hands" dare we even offer ourselves to be His messengers to others?

But if we have been cleansed from sin and made truly the children of God by faith in Christ, there are seven requirements which we all need in varying degrees for effective witness-bearing.

A Knowledge of God.

The old philosophers said, "Knowledge is power." The Scriptures say, "The people that do know their God

shall be strong and do exploits." If we would succeed in the most glorious of all exploits—the winning of souls—we must be "people that do know their God."

Soul-winning means introducing others to Christ. We cannot do that unless we *know* Him ourselves. Andrew first found the Messias, and then he brought Peter. In a court of law, witnesses must speak of what they know, not merely of what they think or suppose. The judge will only listen to the one who is certain of his facts. So if the Christian witness is to find a hearing, he must be able to say, "I *know* Whom I have believed." And that knowledge must not be a mere acquaintance, but a deep, close, prayer-fellowship; an intimate communion. Why was Moses called to his high office? Because, "There was no prophet in Israel like unto him, whom the Lord knew face to face, and mouth to mouth." Those who have done the most for God have known the most of God.

The closest human relationship is that of husband and wife. "They shall be no longer twain, but one flesh," we read. But the intimacy which we should know with God is to be closer still; "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." Read the life stories of men like Hudson Taylor, George Müller, Livingstone, Moody, Meyer and a host of others, and you realize how deep and close was their fellowship with God.

Whenever a man has been Divinely called to a special task, he has been fitted for it by some vision of God. Think of Isaiah who "saw the Lord high and lifted up". That had to precede the call and commission, "Who will go for us? . . . Go tell this people." The woman at the well of Sychar had the revelation of Christ to her own soul before she went to Samaria, and was the means of bringing the people to Jesus. Before Paul could be trusted to be God's messenger, he had to be humbled to the dust by the vision on the Damascus road. As a result of that blinding manifestation he became the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Such visions are always humbling. We are apt to think

too much of ourselves until we have seen God. Daniel says, "I saw the vision and there remained no more strength in me; my comeliness was turned into corruption." Even in the holiest and best traits of his character he then saw evil lurking. Job said, "Mine eye seeth Thee, therefore, I abhor myself and repent." Even the saintly John, on the island of Patmos said, "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead." In every case the revelation produced the collapse of self, which is the very first requirement for any who are to be of use to the Lord. We are worse than useless to Him until we come to an end of our own resources, to find our all in Him. Self-effort and fleshly activity must cease before our service can be effective. The work that counts is not what we do for God, but what He does through us.

This knowledge of God must be an ever-deepening experience. Not long before his martyrdom the Apostle Paul prayed, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death."

Such knowledge alone will sustain us in difficult spheres of service; save us from errors of judgment; add conviction to all that we say; keep us humble in times of success, and give us insight, longsight and foresight.

Jesus took the disciples away "that they might be with Him, and that He might send them forth."

This is one of the fundamental laws of the service of God. We must give God time to reveal Himself to us. We must "abide under the shadow of the Almighty". We must be men and women of prayer, for only so can He show us Himself and His will.

"The time is not wasted that the mower takes to whet his scythe."

The Rev. Lionel Fletcher says, "When you think that incessant work can do more than prayer-prepared work you are making a fatal mistake. A railway engine must refuel or stop!"

Renunciation of Sin.

"In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; some to honour, and some to dishonour." (2 Tim. 2: 20.) Moffatt continues the translation as follows, "If anyone will keep clear of the latter (things that dishonour) he will be put to noble use, he will be consecrated and useful to the Owner of the House, he will be set apart for good work of all kinds. So shun the lusts of youth."

"God cannot use anyone who is in league with sin."

Moody once said, "God does not want gold or silver vessels, but He must have clean ones." If anyone is fainting, you would not offer him water in a dirty cup. So if we are to be of any use to thirsty souls, we must be cleansed, and delivered from sin before we can bring them the water of life.

Some time ago the front door bell in our home went wrong. For some reason only a faint sound came from it, so we sent for a man to put it right. What was wrong? Spiders' webs had got inside it and were hindering the vibrations of sound.

Oh, those cobwebs! Those hindering things which dull our witness. An old man in a church prayer meeting was in the habit of praying, "Lord will You take the cobwebs out of my life?" At last someone, tired of these constant "cobwebs", prayed, "Lord kill the spider!"

The fact is that in all too many lives "cobwebs" are hindering the witness. What are they? Some habit, self-indulgence, friendship, or pastime? Or is it sloth, pride, jealousy, worldliness, self-seeking, love of praise, selfish motives, undisciplined life or self-will?

Let God cleanse them away. Your life will never ring true so long as they remain, and no one will ever respond to your message.

Think again of Paul's metaphor of the vessels. With what care doctors and nurses will sterilize their instruments.

They know that otherwise they would be a cause of disease. They must be more than just clean to the naked eye. They must be cleaned from all those unseen germs which are so deadly. So with us. An uncleansed, inconsistent Christian does infinite harm to the cause of Christ. The sin may be hidden, but its effect is felt in life and witness.

Hugh Redwood has an apt saying, "The pen may have a golden nib, but a hair may spoil the writing." Well may we pray with the Psalmist, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me . . . then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." (*Psalm 51: 10 and 13.*)

Fervour of Spirit.

"*Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.*" (*Rom. 12: 11.*) "Never let your zeal flag, maintain the spiritual glow." (*Moffatt.*)

If the fire gets low, there is no comfort from it. If the battery runs down, there is no sound from your radio set. If your fervour cools off, there is no effective witness. Only those whose zeal is at boiling point win souls.

In the case of Gideon's band, God had to sift them again and again before He could trust them with the task of dealing with the enemy. Those men were submitted to three tests, and according to their reactions, so were they either chosen or rejected.

At first, only volunteers were accepted for service. The need was great, so every man was wanted. When the call went out, thirty-two thousand responded. That was not very many out of a total of one hundred and eighty-four thousand, five hundred. Only one in six. The second test was set, for only those who had courage could be trusted. The fearful and fainthearted would do more harm than good. So Gideon tested the morale of his troops. He said in effect, "Everyone who fears it cannot be done,

had better get away home." How his heart must have sunk when he saw his army melting away until it was only ten thousand. But God saw that there were those still left in the ranks who would hinder. They must be cleared out before they could go forward. Quantity does not count with God, but quality. How strange was the next test! The men were ordered down to the brook to drink, and their method of slaking their thirst revealed whether they were to be trusted or not! Those who lay flat on the ground, lapping the water like dogs, were forgetful of the job in hand. They abandoned themselves to their own physical need, and forgot all about the enemy. The others, so keen to be up and away, and so conscious of the need, just bent down, and with their hands, raised a drop or two to their lips, ever alert for the word of command. The sense of urgency made them, parched though they must have been, utterly forgetful of themselves. Their personal wants did not matter.

Those were the men whom God could trust, just three hundred. They were men of zeal, fervent in spirit, sacrificial to the last point, and ready for anything.

How much of such spirit have we?

"Oh, but I'm tired!" one frequently hears, or, "One must have some relaxation!" or, "It takes too much time!" or, "I should get home too late."

And all the time the enemy is advancing! Souls are being taken captive, and young lives brought to ruin.

The world is passionate in its demands upon the time and strength of youth. Why should Christ have less? It is obvious to-day that we are in the Laodicean age. The church is *lukewarm*. People can be enthusiastic over anything else, but not over winning souls. That is why they are not being won in so many of our churches. Social amenities are of more importance than souls.

I am thinking of a church which is but a sample of many. It has the name of being one where the Gospel is preached. Large texts adorn the exterior, but where are

the young people when the Prayer Meeting night comes round, or the time for the Open-Air? They are just not there. That is too much like hard work!

The tragedy is that while we are excusing ourselves for our slackness, the enemy is going ahead all the time. The Devil takes no time off. Anti-Christian movements are gaining ground all along the line. A writer in *The Black-shirt* wrote some time ago, "We need not be ashamed to liken our Movement to religion. We enter on our task with spiritual zeal and fervour." And from the opposite camp—the Russian Communists—comes this, "It was a Conference on Revolution, and the young people were so full of enthusiasm that a visitor said, 'If I had not known their language, I would have judged by their faces that it was a Conference of Christian youth!'"

These movements push on with fiery fervour, threatening the very existence of Christianity in Europe, while we lie back, and just don't worry. We forget that "the King's business requireth haste." Oh that men of the world might see that while they are fervent over money, fame, popularity, pleasure, sport and amusement, we are on fire for souls—passionate enthusiasts for the cause and Kingdom of Christ!

Gallipoli was lost because of "a fatal inertia."

May God save us from that.

Sympathy of Heart.

With what understanding Paul approached his work of saving souls. His Spirit-touched eyes saw everyone as Christ saw them, whether they were Jews or Gentiles, strong or weak. None were too low for him to touch. None were too high for him to reach. Never would he say, as some said, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou." (*Isaiah* 65: 5.) No! so burning was his passion for souls that he wrote, "To win as many converts as possible, I made myself everyone's slave." (*1 Cor.* 9: 19—

Twentieth Century Translation.) Crashing through Jewish prejudices and heathen superstitions, he stuck at nothing if only he could win souls. Of course he was misunderstood. Such people always are. But like his Lord, Who was criticized for being the Friend of publicans and sinners, Paul's heart so went out in love to all men, that to the Jews he became a Jew to gain the Jews, and to the Gentiles he became as those "without law" to gain them. To the weak he became weak to win the weak. He became all things to all men so that at all costs he could save some.

Had he, I wonder, learnt this secret of adaptability and understanding of human nature from Ezekiel? So versed was he in the Old Testament that the prophet could have been no stranger to him. Turn to chapter three and verse fifteen. "I came to them of the captivity . . . and I sat where they sat, and remained there . . . among them seven days." Oh that more of us knew how to do what Ezekiel did!

Only in this way can we reach hearts that are broken, and lives that are captured by the evil one. We must get right alongside them, put ourselves in their place, think and feel as they feel, and seek to know their problems. Are they practical difficulties? Then we must be patient enough to think through them with those who are perplexed. Are they intellectual problems? Then we must be able to enter into them with Spirit-taught wisdom. Are they moral problems? Then, however terrible they may be, and however much we naturally shrink from them, we must be willing to help these poor defeated souls, and point them to Him Who alone can deliver.

A church convention was being held and an "Efficiency Conference" was in session. Brother B. sat through a morning session, hearing speeches, reports, and surveys without end, and then slipped out while the members of the conference were eating lunch, preparatory to another long afternoon session. He said to a friend, "George, I couldn't stand it any longer in that conference on *efficiency*."

It got too monotonous for me, so I slipped out and ate lunch with a working man I know in the mills. We sat on the curbstone and ate from his lunch pail, and I prayed with him, and he gave his heart to the Lord. I've been laying for that rascal for months. All morning in that slow conference I kept thinking of him. They were talking about saving men in mass movements, and that's all right. But I knew where Jim Ruggles sat to eat his lunch, so I slipped out and found him for the Lord."

There must have been something very wonderful about the prophet Elisha which made the Shunamite woman send for him when her little son lay dead. When he reached the stricken house, where the mother's heart was just breaking, he did not hide himself behind pious platitudes, or stand aloof from her in her grief. He went right into the death chamber, shut the door behind him, and prayed "and lay upon the child, put his mouth upon his mouth, his eyes upon his eyes, his hands upon his hands, and he stretched himself upon the child." Jewish Law would pronounce the prophet unclean through that contact with death, but he did not mind. He would suffer anything if only he could bring life back to the boy, and comfort to the stricken mother.

To what extent do we feel as Elisha felt when in the presence of need? Someone has said, "Many are willing to go through fire and water, but not willing to go through mud!" Sometimes one almost feels as if one needs a bath inside and out after dealing with a soul, but if we are to be of use to God, we must be willing for anything, even "the mud" and all that is repulsive to one's natural inclinations.

We cannot *heal* if we do not *feel*. Souls are not led to Christ by the tips of the fingers. In seven instances we read of our Lord that "He was moved with compassion", and in every case He was so moved that He did something definite to meet the need. The sight of suffering always stirred Him.

In this, as in everything else, He is our example. How different was the way He dealt with the woman at Sychar from His method with Nicodemus. With the latter He adopted an intellectual approach. Nicodemus was a teacher in Israel, so was more likely to respond to a thoughtful conversation away from prying eyes.

With the woman it was different. She had no such questions. Her need was a moral one, and the point of contact was made along the line of an everyday occurrence. Drawing water was her job, and Jesus met her right there. With perfect ease He turned the conversation to spiritual things, though she was not a seeker as was Nicodemus.

Christ showed a real interest in what interested them, and so reached their hearts. That is soul-winning. We, too, must find our points of contact in other people's concerns. Otherwise we shall fail to know what they need. We must recognize their different tastes and prejudices, as well as their problems and difficulties. We must win their confidence before we can hope to get them to unburden their hearts.

Dr. Jowett tells of a shop for fishing tackle, where there was a notice, "Flies sold here suitable for fish in this locality." We must know our fish, and also what fly to use, what bait to throw out if we would "catch men".

Soul-winning is a delicate task. People do not wear their hearts on their sleeves. We must respect their reserve and sensitiveness. It may be that the enquirer would rather talk to someone of the same sex. In that case we must find the one they need who can help. It may be some older person of greater experience than ourselves, or perhaps a younger one who would understand better what the trouble is.

"Oh no, I could not talk to her," said a girl the other day. She had been brought to the meeting by a Christian friend, but for some reason that Christian girl had given the impression that she had no patience with "love affairs", so her friend could not unburden her heart to her. She was

only thinking of her spiritual need, and failed to understand that practical needs are very closely akin, and the two must be thought of together. To be swept aside by any seeking soul as one who "does not understand" should be one of the things to dread. How can we help folk if they get the idea that their problem means nothing to us? It was not so with Christ. Well may we pray,

*"Give me a heart sympathetic and tender,
Jesus like Thine, Jesus like Thine,
Touched with the needs that are surging around me,
And filled with compassion Divine."*

The Development of Gifts.

In his instructions to young Timothy, Paul says, "*Let no man despise thy youth. Give attendance to reading. Neglect not the gift that is in thee . . . Meditate upon these things. Give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear unto all.*" "*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*" (1 Tim 4: 12-15. 2 Tim 2: 15.)

The older man realized that, however zealous and devoted Timothy might be, he could not become his best for God without hard work. There is no royal road to success.

When a young fellow or girl comes to me seeking advice about Christian service, I cannot help grieving sometimes when questions reveal that they have done nothing to prepare for such service. There has been no systematic Bible Study nor real reading, no money saved for training, and no experience gained. Yet so often they say, "I am quite sure that God has called me to the mission field!" They expect to be accepted and sent abroad to convert the heathen, when they have never tried to lead one soul to Christ at home, nor even learned how to do it. Miss Mildred Cable, speaking on this subject, once said, "Many seem to expect a miraculous change to take place in them

somewhere en route to the mission field, enabling them to be effective missionaries without the trouble of any previous training." The fact is God never puts a premium on laziness. He never makes up supernaturally for what can be done by hard work.

When our Lord sent the disciples to prepare for the Last Supper, He said they would meet a man bearing a pitcher of water, whom they were to follow, and that he would show them a "large upper room furnished and prepared". There they were to make ready the Passover. Dr. Moffatt translates it, "A large room upstairs with couches spread all ready." So it was not the smallest, meanest, barest room in the house which that man offered to Christ. I fear that is what some of us present. This man gave the best he had.

And that is what Christ wants from us.

When He comes and asks for the use of our life, does He find it "furnished and prepared" for His use? He wants trained minds, disciplined lives, fit bodies and developed talents. Newman Watts, in his book, *One Hundred Per Cent for God*, goes so far as to say, "The greatest hindrance to revival is mental laziness." It is no mark of spirituality to be opposed to study, training and preparation for Christian service. Our Lord condemned those who buried their talent, yet how many young Christians are doing that to-day. They have voices, but false modesty keeps them from singing, or sheer laziness and contentment with the mediocre keeps them from becoming really efficient. How many services are spoilt by poor pianists who have never taken the trouble to learn how to accompany for congregational singing—a very different thing from ordinary playing. Many a young speaker fails to get his message across because he uses his voice wrongly. It has never occurred to him that this could be remedied. When we listen to addresses, so often the idea is good, and the doctrine sound, but the arrangement of the material is so confused that much of the effect is lost.

If no good literature is ever read, speaking suffers. A good vocabulary is not picked up from picture papers.

For everything else to-day, training is considered essential. Night Schools are crowded. In fact many a firm will only employ those young people who are willing to attend them. They must add to their proficiency if they are to be worth employing.

Why should we be content with a lower standard in the highest service? Even for those who cannot enter training for whole-time ministry, there are facilities to-day in the way of Correspondence Courses, Schools of Evangelism, etc.

So I would urge Christian youth—Furnish your brain! Cultivate your talents! Develop your personality! Plan your time! Then when Christ comes to claim his use of the "guest chamber" He will find it "furnished and ready".

Surrender of All.

The very heart of all service is obedience. All obedience means the submission of one will to another. Every soldier who enlists swears allegiance to his king, and must willingly and unquestioningly obey every command. Paul expresses this in his use of the word, "bond slave". Of all the five Greek words used in the New Testament for "servant" this one expresses most completely the idea of being utterly at the Master's disposal.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul says, "*Surely you know that when you offer yourselves as servants to obey anyone you are the servants of the person whom you obey.*" (Rom. 6: 16—*Twentieth Century Translation.*) Then comparing the two forms of service, he says, "*Do not offer any part of your bodies to sin, in the cause of unrighteousness, but once for all offer yourselves to God, and devote every part of your bodies to the cause of righteousness.*"

Christ claims every part of us, spirit, soul and body.

Paul did not only exhort to this, he exemplified it in his own life. Listen to what he says to the Corinthians. "*I am keeping nothing back from you; my heart is wide open for you. 'Restraint' that lies with you, not me.*" Oh, the pathos of these words! Paul was grieved by the partial surrender of the Corinthians. Therefore, he adds this appeal, "*Keep out of all incongruous ties with unbelievers. . . . How can light associate with darkness? What business has a believer with an unbeliever? What compact can there be between God's Temple and idols? . . . Beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that contaminates, either flesh or spirit; let us be fully consecrated.*" (2 Cor. 6: 11—7: 1.) (Moffatt.)

Paul had already said in his first letter to them, "*I maul and master my body, in case, after preaching to other people, I am disqualified myself.*" (1 Cor. 9: 27.) (Moffatt.)

"In case I am disqualified myself." How this expression reveals the spirit of the man! This intense dread of failing his Lord was the inspiration of all his service. This was the motive of his uttermost consecration. He recognized that the supreme qualification for the service of Christ was a surrender which was ready for any sacrifice, which knew no limitation and which never "kept back part of the price". To Paul the worst thing that could happen would be disqualification. He dreaded such disgrace more than any athlete. He would "maul and master his body" to prevent it.

If we are to be worthy successors of such an evangelist as Paul, this is the spirit which must animate us. It will mean being willing for a God-revised life. Consecration should mean the sacrifice of the legitimate and the taking on of the unnecessary. If a choice has to be made between the Prayer Meeting and the social function; between the Bible and secular books; between the armchair and the Sunday-School Class; between a game of tennis and the Open-Air Meeting, such problems are easily settled when life is ruled by Paul's standard of consecration.

The task of evangelism is so great and so urgent to-day that it demands the same spirit as was required of the Nazarite of old who made a special vow of separation unto the Lord. "*When either man or woman shall make a special vow, the vow of a Nazarite, to separate himself unto the Lord, he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink. . . . All the days of his separation, he shall eat nothing that is made of the grape vine, from the kernels even to the husk.*" His vow was one of total abstinence, not only from things which were not wrong in themselves, and which to others might be beneficial, but from anything which was even associated with evil, or which prevented his being his best for the service to which he had been specially called of God. (See *Numbers 6: 2-3.*) Paul himself had taken this vow. (*Acts 18: 18.*)

Nearly forty years ago an article appeared in a missionary magazine upon the subject of prayer and fasting. I quote a paragraph from it. "It is for us who are trying to serve our Lord to treat the world not only in its corruptions, but in its legitimate joys as a subject that we should touch with strict reserve and abstinence. If we are caught by its spirit, or fed upon its meat, we shall not feel the breath of the highest, nor receive the manna that falleth from heaven. We are bound to look upon the world with all its delights and attractions, with suspicion and with reserve. *It is not for us—not for us.* We are called into a higher Kingdom. It is not that our Lord forbids us this or that indulgence or comfort of our life; it is not that He is stern, making upon us the call of the ascetic: but it is that we who love our Lord, voluntarily and gladly lay aside the things that charm and ravish the world, that for our part our hearts may be ravished with the things of heaven, and our whole being poured forth in constant and unreserved devotion in the service of the Lord who died to save us."

When such a challenge to separation is ridiculed; when those who do renounce the legitimate comforts of life for

the sake of souls are considered extreme; when unusual zeal for the work of evangelism calls forth criticism in Christian families, and even in circles associated with spiritual work, let me humbly say with Miss Carmichael, "Comrades, in the war of God, has not something got out of its place? Is it not time we called a halt, and searched ourselves in the searchlight of the Cross?"

The Anointing of the Holy Spirit.

But Pentecost follows Calvary. When the qualification of surrender is fulfilled, we are ready to receive power from on high, by which alone service for God can be effective.

Jesus said to His disciples, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." This commission was at once followed by the provision, "He breathed on them and said, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.'" Later, just before His ascension, He said to them, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses."

The errand and the enduement are linked together. The disciples were to go, the Holy Spirit was to come. They dare not go until He had come. His coming enabled them to go. Their going would be effective only as He worked in them and through them. Yet for the doing of the work He needed them as instruments, channels, tools and vessels. He was the *real* Worker; they were but the human agents. They could not do without Him, and He would not do without them. The truth is—the task of evangelization must be done, not without Him, and not without us, but by Him working through us. In the Holy Spirit are all our resources. Even our Lord was anointed by the Holy Spirit at the beginning of His public ministry. On that memorable Sabbath in the synagogue He read from the book of Isaiah and claimed that the fulfilment of these words was in Himself, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach . . ." At

the close of His ministry He said, "Tarry until ye be endued with power." Without that power we are as coals without fire, as lamps without oil, as engines without petrol, as sails without wind. We cannot create one anxious thought in a heart. Only the Holy Spirit can do this, and only thus can a soul be saved. So if anyone needs the anointing of the Holy Spirit, it is the soul-winner. Yet if anyone has a right to claim such anointing, it is he who obeys the command to "go and make disciples".

One of our chief dangers is dependence upon organization, method, talent, training and self-effort. Not that I minimize the value of these, but when they are at their best, without Him, all is of no avail. "It is not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord."

Dr. Wilbur Chapman tells of the great blessing which he received through a conversation which he had with Dr. F. B. Meyer. It was in the grounds of the Northfield Conference. Before breakfast the two men were walking together, and Dr. Chapman said, "Dr. Meyer, what is the matter with me? So many times I seem half empty, and so utterly powerless." In recounting it he said, "Dr. Meyer turned and looked at me in a queer way, then he put his hand on my shoulder and said, 'Have you ever tried to breathe out three times without breathing in once?' I thought he was changing the subject rather quickly, and must be thinking of something else. I wondered if it were some new breathing exercise, so I said, 'I do not think I have.' 'Well,' he said, 'try it.' So I breathed out once, and then I had to breathe in again, and I shall never forget the look on his face as he said, 'Don't you know that you must always breathe in before you can breathe out, and that your breathing out is in proportion to your breathing in?' And then he said, 'Good morning,' and went on into Mr. Moody's house. But I had had my lesson, and knew that I had been trying to breathe out more than I had breathed in. That is the trouble with ninety-nine out of every hundred ministers. Only by breathing in

and in and in again, can we be kept full, and there is power only in fulness."

*"Breathe, oh breathe, Christ of God,
Breathe into my soul;
Send me forth empowered,
Sanctify the whole."*

VII

EMOTION—THE DRIVING FORCE

“ *Wanted !—Hearts baptised with fire,
 Hearts completely cleansed from sin,
 Hearts that will go to the mire,
 Hearts that dare do ought for Him.
 Hearts that will be firmer, braver,
 Hearts like heroes gone before ;
 Hearts enjoying God's full favour,
 Hearts to love Him more and more.*

*Wanted !—Hearts that beat true ever,
 Hearts that can for others feel ;
 Hearts that prove the traitor never,
 Hearts that will the wounded heal ;
 Hearts o'erflowing with compassion,
 Hearts renewed by grace Divine ;
 Hearts aglow with full Salvation,
 Hearts to do “ Thy will, not mine ! ”*

*Wanted !—Hearts to love the masses,
 Hearts to help Him seek the lost ;
 Hearts to help Him save all classes,
 Hearts to help Him save the worst ;
 Hearts to share with Him the weeping,
 Hearts to bear with Him the cross ;
 Hearts to help Him with the reaping,
 Hearts to trust through gain or loss.”*

VII

EMOTION—THE DRIVING FORCE

THE cynic discounts the value of all evangelism because to him it is nothing but emotion; yet the real truth is that without emotion, evangelism is ineffective. After many years in the work, I have no hesitation in saying that the most subtle temptation to all who are engaged in it is the snare of getting too used to it.

Familiarity breeds contempt. The peril comes to us all to get stale, to lose our freshness, to become so accustomed to the telling of the message that we lose the glow of our early enthusiasm, to get so used to facing audiences that we forget they are lost souls. Then preaching becomes metallic, forced, professional, unctiousless.

This was Paul's dread, lest having preached to others he might become a castaway, and this is much more to be dreaded than the fear of being hyper-emotional. Of course, emotion and excitement are not synonymous terms. Excitement is dangerous in religion; emotion is indispensable. After all, the heart of religion is religion in the heart. There can be no soul-saving work without emotion. Whoever saw a fire-brigade or a lifeboat crew do their work without feeling the thrill of emotion? Yet a minister wrote to me the other day saying that when I came to his church for an evangelistic campaign, he thought I would find among his people "a nice, quiet enthusiasm". When I got there, it was like the North Pole!

Paul is, perhaps, the outstanding evangelist of the New Testament writers. We do not think of him especially as an emotional character. We rather look upon him as the man who was strong and virile, the masterful theologian, the cool, calculating logician, and yet there are sentences

scattered throughout his writings which reveal great depths of emotion in his nature. Let me mention some of these.

The Emotion of the Mourner.

Paul wrote, "*I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren*". (Rom. 9: 2-3.) And again, "*For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.*" (Phil. 3: 18.)

"Great heaviness"—"sorrow in my heart"—"weeping"—these striking phrases describe the emotion of the mourner which throbbed and pulsated in his heart for all unsaved souls. Paul was not ashamed to weep, nor to tell us that he wept. He was like his Master, Who "with strong crying and tears offered up prayers and supplications", and Who, gazing at Jerusalem, wept. The word "wept", does not mean the ordinary shedding of tears as when He stood by the tomb of Lazarus. It is a word which really suggests that "His whole frame shook with convulsive sobs". The Psalmist had the same spirit when he wrote, "*Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake Thy law*"—"Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not Thy law."

Do we ever feel like that towards the lost? Paul sees the Godless world as a mourner sees his loved one cold in death, in the grip of the last enemy, and as a mourner with broken heart sobs over the dead, so Paul's heart aches and breaks as he mourns over those dead in sin and in the grip of the arch-enemy of souls.

Dr. J. H. Jowett used to say, "Tearless hearts can never be heralds of the Cross. When our sympathy loses its pang, we can no longer be the servants of the passion."

I heard of a church some time ago where the officers got together for prayer. One Deacon in confession said, "Lord forgive me for my dry eyes. I have never shed a

tear over the lost." There was a revival in that church soon afterwards.

Someone has well said, "Beware of prayerless tears and beware of tearless prayers." "Revival is not going down the street with a big drum; it is going back to Calvary with a big sob."

The Emotion of the Mother.

Again Paul says, "*My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.*" (Gal. 4: 19.) Here he is not mourning over the dead but travailing like a mother, who will suffer anything for the little one she loves. Paul so loved the souls of men that he would endure the pangs of childbirth to bring them to life. He reminds me of David Brainerd who in his journal says, "I wrestled for the in-gathering of souls. I was in such an agony from the sun, half an hour high till near dark that I was wet with sweat, but oh, my Lord sweat blood for such poor souls." Is it any wonder that whole tribes of Indians were swayed as he preached to them the evangel of Divine Love?

So with Paul; when he would express the poignancy of his yearning over the souls of men, he does not hesitate to speak in terms of the pangs of labour to give it adequate interpretation. Again he is like his Master, of Whom Isaiah says, "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied."

The Emotion of Money.

Writing to the Corinthians the apostle says, "*I will very gladly spend and be spent for you.*" (2 Cor. 12: 15.) Dr. Moffatt translates it, "For your souls I will certainly spend my all and be spent myself". The passage suggests to me the emotion of someone bidding in an auction. Someone else bids higher every time, but he so prizes what he seeks to buy, that he bids and bids, till he puts his last cent

on it, for at all costs he must have it. Or it may be likened to the gambler, who puts his last coin on the table in the hope of winning the coveted prize. How far do we exhibit such a spirit? Is there on our part any real expenditure of time, strength, energy or vitality, to win souls?

In London, recently, a man and his wife stood in a theatre queue from 6 a.m. on a Thursday morning until 8 p.m. on the following Friday evening in order to get a front seat at "a first night". Think of it—thirty-eight hours to see a passing show! What expenditure of time! How does that compare with the time we spend in eager service for our Lord?

The Emotion of the Multitude.

Paul, in the same letter says, "*The love of Christ constraineth us*". (2 Cor. 5:14.) The word "constrain" is the same Greek word as that translated "press", found in Luke's Gospel. "*The multitude throng Thee and press Thee.*" (Luke 8:45.) Paul says, The Love of Christ throngs us, presses us, crowds us, sweeps us along.

There is always a peculiar emotion in a crowd: mass-consciousness is a strange and inexplicable thing. We would do things in a crowd we would never do alone. That is true in a cheering crowd, or a laughing crowd, or a weeping crowd. The emotion of a crowd can fairly carry us off our feet. So with Paul: the love of Christ swept him along, constrained him to toil and wrestle for souls.

The Emotion of the Master.

Perhaps the most remarkable utterance of all those which reveal Paul's emotions is his word to the Colossians, "*The gospel . . . which was preached . . . whereof I Paul am made a minister; who now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church.*" (Col. 1: 23-24.)

Here, surely, is the very emotion of the Master, the emotion of Gethsemane, the emotion of the Cross. But did not Christ say, "It is finished"? Can there be anything *behind* in the sufferings of Christ? Can there be anything to "*fill up*"?

Yes! The work of redemption is done, but the work of proclaiming it to a sin-enslaved world has to be done. The same sacrificial spirit is needed for both. The emotion of love which took Christ to the cross must send us anywhere. He bids us go to announce to the world His full and free salvation. The Christ of the Cross and the Cross of Christ were repeated in Paul, and must be repeated in you and me, if we are ever to be soul-winners. Someone has said, "Christianity without sacrifice is the laughing-stock of Hell."

"Why do you wish to return?" asked Dr. Jowett once of a noble young missionary who had been invalided home. "Because I can't sleep for thinking of them." "But," said Dr. Jowett, "except I spend a day with my Lord, the trend of my life is quite the other way. I cannot think about them, because I am so inclined to sleep. A benumbment settles down upon my spirit, and the pangs of the world awaken no corresponding sympathy in my heart."

But Christ never knew any such benumbment upon His spirit. The fires of love in His heart never burned low. "Always, and for ever He was moved by a mighty inner impulse to help men. Everything about His life pictures Him as one who was motivated by a dominating, overwhelming passion. The travail of His soul never subsided, never failed. It took Him to the Cross, to the tomb, and to the resurrection. It was His one supreme passion, the propulsive power of a tremendous conviction of the value of a soul." (*R. Lee Berry.*)

This Calvary spirit is our primary need in all services for Christ. Without it we toil laboriously. With it we overflow in blessing to others.

A friend once showed me a letter from a missionary who

had been seven years all alone among one of the wildest tribes in Southern Sudan. For three years previously he had been with fellow missionaries. But ten years of close contact with all the Hellish abominations of those degraded people had not diminished in the least the passion of love in his heart for their souls.

What he said in the letter was all the more striking because very soon after writing it he fell ill and died of blackwater fever.

His last message therefore was this:—“*I am red hot for souls! Oh! don't miss the mark. So many are losing the Calvary passion. Hit the mark always—Pluck the brands from the burning! Win another soul for the exalted Prince and Saviour.*”

Is not this the spirit of our Lord Himself? The emotion of the Master?

Is not this the spirit we all supremely need?

Is not this the spirit which alone can bring a great ingathering of souls?

“*Oh, for a passionate passion for souls.
Oh, for a pity that yearns.
Oh, for a love that loves unto death.
Oh, for a fire that burns.
Oh, for a pure, prayer power that prevails;
That pours itself out for the lost;
Victorious prayer in the Conqueror's name.
Oh, for a Pentecost.*”

VIII

THE CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIAN YOUTH

3
" He came to the crossroads all alone,
With the sunrise in his face,
He had no fear for the path unknown,
He was set for an ambitious race.

The road stretched east,
And the road stretched west.
No one showed him which was the best.
So, the boy turned wrong, and went on down,
And lost the race and the victor's crown,
And fell at last in an ugly snare
Because no one stood at the crossroads there.

Another boy on another day
At the self-same crossroads stood.
He paused a moment to choose the way
Which would lead to the greater good.
The road stretched east, and the road stretched west
But I was there to show him the best.

And the boy turned right, and went on and on ;
He won the race and the victor's crown,
And came at last to the mansions fair,
Because I stood at the crossroads there.

Since then I have raised a daily prayer,
That I be kept faithfully standing there,
To help the runners as they run,
And save my own, and another's son."

The Spectator.

VIII

THE CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIAN YOUTH

It was early one morning. The Vicar was out betimes. Looking across his garden he saw one of the boys of his Bible-class out on the tennis court alone, landing balls over the net as hard as he could.

"What are you doing?" called out the Vicar.

"Speeding up my service, Sir," said the boy.

If this book is to accomplish that for which many prayers have been offered, this will be the result in the lives of many young Christians.

I am more convinced than ever to-day that youth must reach youth.

In his sermon at Antioch, Paul summed up David's life in these words, "David served his own generation by the will of God." (*Acts* 13: 36.)

To Christian youth to-day is committed the tremendous responsibility of service for God among their own generation. The opportunity for evangelization is practically limited to the life of each generation—that is about one-third of a century. Let this thought be burned in upon our hearts. Within that short period, every new generation must accomplish whatever work they are to do for their contemporaries, for both they and the souls for whom they are held responsible are rapidly passing away.

Christian youth! You cannot reach the generations that are passed. Their day has gone. The oncoming generation you can only influence indirectly through the present. The really urgent thing for you is to witness to your own generation. Thousands of them are within your reach every day in the shop, office and factory. If you do not win them now; will you ever do so? My appeal to you is that you will get the burden of your own generation upon your heart.

Think of the young people with whom you are now in touch day by day. Remember that contact means opportunity, and opportunity means responsibility. Let me add, responsibility is your response to God's ability. The serious thing is that by changing circumstances, the young people with whom you are now in touch will soon have passed out of your reach.

Dr. R. A. Torrey used to tell of a student with whom he once shared rooms. They were together in everything; meals, games, and lectures, but in those days, Torrey was not a Christian. College days passed, and the two men went their several ways. Later, Torrey was converted, and soon after, he saw in a newspaper the account of a baseball accident, when a man was killed. To his horror the name was that of his old friend. When he related this story in his great campaigns, he would then add, with tremendous emphasis, "Oh, if only, if only, if only I had been a Christian when we were at college together, I might have been able to win him to Christ."

None are more likely to win to Christ the present generation than those who belong to it? That is why my final appeal is to you—yes, to you who compose modern Christian youth. No one can understand young people's problems to-day as you can. No one is so closely in touch with them, or can so easily find points of contact as you. God is calling you to reach them. He is placing the responsibility of their evangelization upon you. You know their outlook, vocabulary and mentality. They have the post-war mind, and so have you. It is up to you to study their needs, keep abreast of their thinking, be sympathetic with their point of view, understand their temptations, doubts and aspirations, discover the best avenues of approach and the best terms in which to present the Gospel of Christ.

My own study of modern youth leads me to the conviction that often they are critical of professional preachers and whole-time Christian workers. Certainly these have

their job, which only they can do, but the non-Christian of to-day will often respond more willingly, in the first place to the non-professional approach made by one of his own ilk. Somehow or other there has grown up, since the War, a critical attitude on the part of non-Christian youth to organized Christianity. In many circles, churches and parsons are taboo. If, therefore, these young people are to be reached, it must be by Christian youth with whom they are in touch every day in commercial life. The witness of life and lip is of supreme importance. After all, the professional preacher can only preach for half an hour or so a few times in the week. You Christian young people have opportunities in your place of business all day long, and every day.

Folk are not interested in theology, but they are interested in life, and if they see in your life something which reveals a satisfaction for which they long, they will want to know your secret. When you have aroused their interest, then they are more likely to respond to a Gospel message in a meeting to which you may invite them. There will always be a need for preaching, but what I am emphasizing here is the part that young Christians can play in overcoming the barriers which have come between the mass of the people and organized Christianity.

Was there ever a generation in such desperate need as this one? I see no signs of the forces of evil slumbering. Christians slumber, but Satan's hosts advance. I ask, why should they race us?

There had been a series of fires. Incendiarism was suspected. Boy Scouts got on the job. They were suspicious of one mentally deficient fellow in the district, so they set their watch. Tracing him to a goods yard, they tracked him down. Crouching under the shadow of a wall, one boy watched his chance. Along came the suspect with a home-made torch under his arm, and a bottle in his hand. He was just about to pour out the paraffin and light the torch, when he was pounced upon and caught.

Recounting the incident the Scout said, "He never lit that torch. I got there first."

"I got there first!" What a phrase for Christian youth!

Oh, to save souls before the fires of sin consume them, before the Devil captures them, and before the world seduces them! The forces of evil:—Secularism, Materialism, Atheism, Romanism, Communism, are all on their track. On youth, their hope is set. Why must we leave them to their mercy? Oh, to "*get there first*" with the message of redeeming love and victorious life!

Was there ever a generation so well equipped for the service of Christ? Higher education, business training and the discipline of sport have fitted them for it perhaps better than any other generation. Youth to-day has freedom and scope for its energies which was denied to former generations. They are filling a wider place, and exercising a larger influence than ever before. The possibilities inherent in one life are limitless.

So let this challenge to a new endeavour and a new enthusiasm in evangelism be sounded out to all Christian youth.

I summon you to a more full-blooded crusade against sin, to a deeper devotion to Christ, to a more effective witness for Him to the youth of our day. The only hope for our bewildered age is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must "gird up the loins of our mind", we must buy up the opportunities, we must call up all the reserves to bring the youth of our day and generation to the feet of our crucified and risen Lord. To mark time now, to sit back now, to hold back anything from Christ, is to give the adversary a chance to triumph. All the signs of the times point to the approaching end of the age. We "know not the day nor the hour when the Son of Man cometh". What we do for God and our generation we must do quickly. The present age is fraught with tremendous perils. There has never been a period like this one. The youth of the world is in a desperate plight because they know not our Saviour. On every hand souls for whom

Christ died are perishing. We profess to know the way of salvation. Let us then multiply our labours, "speed up our service", develop our gifts, deepen our surrender, and push forward our lines of advance. Let us resolve, on our knees, to respond to the challenge of this hour, so that every young man and woman within our reach shall at least hear the good news of our redeeming and conquering Christ.

A Missionary friend has just written to me telling of a Brazilian girl aged twenty-two who is a graduate of an American College. She wrote to him saying, "It was in my girlhood that I first heard about the work among the savages in our junglelands. . . . My heart flamed with pure passion for souls, and I was then nine years old. Now I am all on fire for Christ, and the supreme ambition of my life is to go to the place where no one else will go, to surrender my best youthful days to His service. I have counted the cost, but to me it appears as no cost at all, when I think of my loving Saviour and Friend who has satisfied the deepest longings of my heart."

The Missionary adds, "So even in Brazil youth responds to the great challenge of these days." Similar news reaches me from Australia, South Africa, America, Canada, Switzerland, and Scandinavia. Christian youth is, I believe "on the march". They are responding to God's call. A wave of new enthusiasm for the service of Christ is bearing them along in new endeavour. This uprising of spiritual forces among youth is one of the most significant things of our day. The tide of evangelism is rising. The Spirit of God is moving. There is a "going in the tops of the mulberry trees". Does it mean that this generation will complete the Church's task of world evangelization? Upon your response depends the answer.

*"Facing a task unfinished,
That drives us to our knees,
A need that undiminished
Rebukes our slothful ease;*

Challenging Youth

*We who rejoice to know Thee,
Renew before Thy Throne
The solemn pledge we owe Thee,
To go and make Thee known.*

*Where other Lords beside Thee
Hold their unhindered sway,
Where forces that defied Thee,
Defy Thee still to-day;
With none to heed their crying
For life, and love, and light,
Unnumbered souls are dying,
And pass into the night.*

*We bear the torch that, flaming,
Fell from the hands of those
Who gave their lives proclaiming
That Jesus died and rose;
Ours is the same commission,
The same glad message ours,
Fired by the same ambition,
To Thee we yield our powers.*

*O Father who sustained them!
O Spirit who inspired!
Saviour whose love constrained them
To toil with zeal untired;
From cowardice defend us,
From lethargy awake!
Forth on Thine errand send us
To labour for Thy sake."*

Bishop Frank Houghton.

